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THEROIGNE DE MERICOURT

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THEROIGNE DE MERICOURT;

A Romance,

IN FIVE PARTS,

BY

LOUIS S. D. REES.

PART I.

Philadelphia :
WILLIS P. HAZARD,
178 CHESNUT STREET.

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INQUIRER BOOK PRESS, 57 SOUTH THIRD STREET, PHILADELPHIA.

TO ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE—

The traveller, poet, orator, historian;—whose holy eloquence in the hour of revolutionary excitement did more for the good of humanity and the honor of his country, than even the varied and beautiful productions of his pen have done for his own literary fame,—this First Part of a Romance, the idea of which was suggested by a perusal of the “*Histoire des Girondins*,” is most respectfully inscribed by his obedient servant and sincere admirer,

THE AUTHOR.

TO THE PUBLIC.

The favorable opinions expressed by his friends, have emboldened the author of the following lines to submit them to the public eye. He does so with considerable hesitation; not only because he appreciates the difficulties of the task he has undertaken in attempting to write a romance, but also because he is aware that there is a general indisposition on the part of the reading world, to give attention to any thing that comes to it in a metrical form. He invokes, however, a patient perusal and a candid judgment, if not for his own sake, yet at least for the sake of her whom he has chosen to be the subject of his song,—Théroigne de Méricourt, one of the most beautiful, the most gifted, and the most ill-fated of women.

THEROIGNE DE MERICOURT.

A ROMANCE.

PART I.

Hark! what cry of wild despair
Rudely wakes the slumbering air?
See! what spectral figure stands;
Stretches forth its withered hands;
Lays its throbbing bosom bare;
Tears its long and streaming hair;
Upward glances to the sky;
Downward turns its flashing eye;
Loudly laughs with causeless glee;
Weeps at fancied misery?

No decent robe of pride and taste
Is girdled round that fragile waist;
No gem-set gold or braided twist
Encompasses that slender wrist;
Nor sparkles on her hand the ring,
Whose magic circle still might bring
Back to the soul all fresh and warm,
Some lost but not forgotten form:—

But squalid raiment, coarse and mean,
 Where many a gaping rent is seen,
 Too oft to wanton eye betrays
 Charms never meant for idle gaze;
 While the rough cord and rattling chain,
 Her movements' wild excess restrain.

But list! she speaks;—and Oh! such words
 Of horror, that (like reeking swords,
 Which, stained with gouttes of human gore,
 Still gleam as if they asked for more,)
 They seem to come from one whose hand
 Hath done the deeds a fiend had plann'd.

“Off with his head! Away!” she cries;—
 “No mercy here!—the traitor dies!
 “Blood, blood we'll have, to quench our thirst
 “For vengeance on the race accurst,—
 “Those proud aristocrats, whose reign,
 “Millions had mourned, but mourned in vain.
 “Raise the tall scaffold to the sky!
 “'Twere sweet to see our tyrants die.—
 “Ha! ha! bethink thee of the day
 “When, lured from home and peace away,
 “I left—What! shrink ye back, vile race?
 “Cowards! away! Give woman place!
 “And let her wield the avenging knife!
 “And let her head the glorious strife!—
 “Oh! spare me, spare me!” yet she cries:
 “Not now! not here! before all eyes!

"Bury me in some dungeon deep;
 "Or hurl me down the craggy steep;
 "Or cast me to the raging flame;
 "But do not—Ha! to see my shame
 "Thou too hast left thy silent grave!
 "Or art thou come thy child to save?
 "Scourge me? it cannot, shall not be:—
 "See, see! my bonds are burst,—I'm free!"—

Poor maniac wretch! 'tis Death alone
 Shall free thee from those walls of stone;
 Those iron bars; that clanking chain;
 That worse than any real pain;—
 Those fancied tortures of the mind,
 The direst that afflict mankind.

Alas! can madness thus efface
 Each beauteous trait, each winning grace;
 And sink the sacred human form
 Beneath the level of the worm?
 Ah! I have seen the new-born charms
 Of infants in their mothers' arms,
 Just waking from a sweet repose,
 Disfigured by convulsive throes:—
 I've seen Consumption's hand of stealth
 Plant lilies on the brow of health,
 And draw the shadows of the tomb
 Athwart youth's bright and sunny bloom:—
 I've seen, beneath Contagion's power,
 The loveliest form, like some fair flower,

Smitten with such a fearful blight,
 That Pity sickened at the sight:—
 I've seen the ashes of the dead
 Thrown festering from their lowly bed,
 And left exposed to common view
 As if to show what Death can do:—
 But all was mercy, beauty all,
 Compared with what men Madness call;—
 That makes the intellectual sight
 Impervious save to Hell's own light;—
 That shuts the intellectual ear
 Save to the damnings of despair;—
 That prompts the virgin's lip to speak
 Words so debased, that to the cheek
 Of common wantons there would rush,
 While uttering them, the burning blush;—
 That sways its sceptre of control
 Where tyrants cannot—o'er the soul;—
 And makes a thing of human birth
 A very demon upon earth.

God! if for records on my page
 Of early youth or later age;—
 Records of crimes against thy law—
 Thy hand the avenging sword must draw;
 Oh! let its stroke remorseless fall
 On health, wealth, freedom, life;—yea, all:—
 Yet, in my sorrow's darkest hour,
 Let Reason still retain its power;
 Nor quench that last celestial ray,
 Till in death's shades I pass away!

But turn we from this dreary sight
 To view a scene where all is bright;
 Where thoughtless youth and sober age
 Alike in rustic sports engage;
 And, turning from their toils away,
 Join in a general holiday:
 While Virtue can without a frown
 Upon the merry group look down;
 And e'en Religion smiles to see
 Their pure unsullied revelry.

There are spots in creation which Nature's own hand
 Would seem in her happiest moods to have plann'd;
 Or some potent magician, with mystical spell,
 To have raised as a home where a Peri might dwell:
 So radiantly bright, or so calmly serene;
 So free from all shadows to darken the scene;
 That 'tis hard to believe the deep wrinkle of care
 Can furrow the brows of the favored ones there;
 Or the terrible phantoms of sickness and death
 Pollute the fair place with their pestilent breath.

Perchance 'tis some mansion of opulent ease
 Half hid from the view by embosoming trees;
 Placed high on the brow of a verdure-clad hill,
 As a monument reared to its architect's skill:
 Not vulgarly tricked out, for gaudy display,
 With pillars of plaster, and coatings of clay;
 But simple yet noble, as best might become,
 Not the splendor of state, but the comfort of home.

In front a broad meadow, where browse or recline
 The favorite horse, and the well-fatted kine,
 The innocent lamb, and the matronly ewe,—
 Just enough to give quiet repose to the view:
 More near a choice garden, from whose spicy bowers
 Exhales the sweet odor of thousands of flowers,
 Where, like faithless adorers, the butterfly gay
 Just sips of their sweetness, then flutters away.

Perchance 'tis some castle, whose battlements rise
 As if conscious of strength, till they threaten the
 skies;

While its deep-laid foundations, embracing the rock,
 Have stood, and shall stand, of long ages the shock.
 Around, rugged steep, which the goat cannot climb,
 Stand as bulwarks against the encroachments of
 Time.

Far below foams a torrent, whose waters now flash
 'Neath the blaze of the sun; now mysteriously dash
 Through the gloom of ravines, from whence issues
 alone

The deep roar of its waves, or the rock's hollow
 groan;

While the landscape beyond wears an aspect so soft,
 So unlike the huge relic which towers aloft,
 That it seems like an infant laid prostrate in prayer
 At the feet of the giant who frowns on it there.

Perchance 'tis some valley where, hid from mankind,
 A few tranquil spirits their paradise find;

Who, sick of the world, with its bitter and sweet,
Have sought refuge from all in this welcome retreat.

But all that elsewhere boasts of grandeur or grace,
Met in one to embellish the beautiful place,
Whose innocent revelry gladdens our eye

As we turn with alarm from the maniac's cry.
See the castle, which still, in defiance of Time,
Stands as firm in its age as it stood in its prime;
Though the festival pomp and the feudal array
Which it witnessed of old have long since passed
away.

See the mansion, whose lordly possessor combines
The wealth that commands with the taste that
refines:—

And there, far below, in that beautiful vale,
See the homes where repose and contentment
prevail;

Where no one can boast of broad acres he owns,
And no one unpitied in misery groans;
Where the milk of their flocks, or the fruit of their
fields

To each, without luxury, competence yields;
And if there, as elsewhere, bread is purchased by
toil,

Yet the labor bestowed on a generous soil
But renders more welcome the calm eventide,
When, sitting at ease by his own fireside,
Or reclining outstretched 'neath the sun's western
ray,

With his "gudewife" at hand and his children at
play,

The poorest man feels a warm glow at his heart,
 Such as wealth with its splendors can never impart;
 And looking towards heaven he gratefully sings,
 "'Tis the Good God above us who gives these good
 things."*

It was not in that sea-girt isle,
 Where Liberty with radiant smile
 Shines equally on all;
 While Commerce with a bounteous hand
 Spreads plenty o'er the favored land,
 Obedient to her call:—

It was not in this western sphere
 Where Nature's giant forms appear
 In cataract, tree, or plain;
 While mighty floods impetuous sweep,
 Now broad as seas, and now as deep,
 Down to the circling main:—

It was not in that sunny land
 Whence Dante's pen and Raphael's hand
 Electrified the world;
 Whence Rome, the mistress of mankind,
 Through every clime, to every wind,
 Her conquering flag unfurled:—

It was in thee, thou lovely France,
 Land of the festive song and dance,
 Foremost on history's page;

* "Deus nobis hæc otia fecit."

Where still new scenes of wonder rise
 To take the nations by surprise,
 As age succeeds to age!

Oh! who that treads thy princely halls,
 And views upon their gorgeous walls
 The records of thy fame;
 Or sees thy columns, mounting high
 And pointing upward to the sky,
 Inscribed with many a name:—

Who that recalls the noble men
 Potent to wield the sword or pen,
 To conquer or to save;
 Who hailed thee as their land of birth,
 And found in thee their bed of earth,
 Their cradle and their grave:—

Who that remembers that thy land
 Was rescued once by woman's hand
 From fierce invading foes;
 And cowering 'neath the hated yoke,
 At her command its fetters broke
 And in its strength uprose:—

Who that bethinks him of the man
 Whose mighty mind alike could span
 The little and the great;
 Could keep a conquered world in awe,
 Construct a road, reform a law,
 Or renovate a state:—

Who that to all these marvels turns,
Can wonder at the pride that burns

Within each son of thine,
As, counting o'er thy countless charms,
Thy deeds in arts, thy deeds in arms,
He cries, "This land is mine?"

Nor let me pass unheeded by
That kind unvarying courtesy

Which every stranger meets,
Who moves thy higher walks among,
Or mingles with the meaner throng
That traverses thy streets.

Oh! it hath been my lot to roam
Far from my country and my home

With desolated heart;
And still thy gentle, kindly smile
Could soothe my grief, my cares beguile,
And peace and hope impart.

But wherefore to-day All this festive array,
Wherein rich and poor equally share?

What lends a new grace To the child's merry face,
And smooths the rough forehead of Care?

Why floats o'er the hall And the old castle wall
The banner so gorgeous and bright;

While each cottage is seen Decked with garlands
of green,
To betoken its owner's delight?

What wakes the glad notes Whose sweet harmony
floats

From yon church o'er the scene far and near?
And why does the song Of the peasant prolong
The sweet sound as it falls on his ear?

Why groans the full board With each luxury stored,
Where the lord and his tenantry join?
And why does the glass So incessantly pass
With its bumpers of generous wine?

Is it Victory's voice Bids the rustics rejoice
O'er their country's success in the field?
Or the last sheaf of corn From the harvesting
borne
At the close of a plentiful yield?

No; the vale and hill-top With the ungathered crop
Still shine as with gilding o'erspread;
And the revelry here Is unstained by the tear
Which the widow and orphan have shed.

Little they know who sit, and gaze
With eager eyes upon the blaze
Of glaring light and gaudy hue
With which the drama courts their view:
Who see now lamp-lit suns arise,
Now clouds bedeck the canvas skies;
Now the tall ship, whose outspread sails
Are swelled by artificial gales;

Now the cool grot, or woodland shade,
 As if in taunting mockery made
 Of that o'ercrowded human mass
 Who hail the wonders as they pass :—
 Little they know how dark and drear
 Viewed from behind those scenes appear,
 Where nought but dust and cobwebs hide
 The vile reverse of all that pride :

Little they know who raise the shout
 That greets the player, strutting out
 To act his part with mimic skill
 Obedient to another's will,
 And weep or laugh, grieve or rejoice
 According to the prompter's voice :—
 Little that gaping crowd can tell
 What real joys his bosom swell ;
 Or what unfeigned distress and pain
 May wring his heart, and fire his brain !

And have not bards in every age
 Told us "this life is but a stage ;"
 And each man, at his best estate,
 An actor in the scenes of fate ?
 Who wears a smile, who drops a tear
 Obedient to a heart sincere ?
 Where is the man that does not throw
 A mantle o'er his weal and woe,
 And deck him with a borrowed plume
 Ere he step forth to rave and fume,

And tread the boards of life's wide stage,
 The amusement of a passing age?
 And when, despite the busy play,
 We steal at intervals away,
 And hide us in lone solitudes
 Where no unwelcome eye intrudes;
 Is it not there, and there alone,
 We truly smile, and truly groan?
 And when Death lets the curtain fall
 On play, and players, scenes, and all,
 Do we not then first lay aside
 The counterfeiting garb of pride,
 And stand before our Maker's eye
 In beauty or deformity?
 Yes, 'tis an universal truth,—
 In hoary age, in sprightly youth;—
 Deep sunk in vice, by virtue raised;—
 Courted or shunned, reviled or praised;—
 Though scanned by many a curious eye,
 UNKNOWN WE LIVE, UNKNOWN WE DIE.

Behold yon mansion's noble lord!
 With ample wealth his chest is stored;
 His barn, his granary abounds
 With the rich produce of his grounds;
 The scutcheon of his ancient race
 No treason stains, no crimes debase;
 And he as proudly lifts his head
 As any of the ancestral dead.
 The world applaud his happy state,
 Envy a man so rich and great,

Nor doubt that he, at least, is free
From the sad entail,—misery!

Had not they seen him bow his head
In drooping anguish o'er that bed,
Where, racked with pain and fell disease,
His son, his only son he sees?
Had they not seen him wipe away
With trembling hand the drops that lay
Upon that brow so still and fair,
Like tears which Death himself shed there?
Had they not seen, as, hour by hour,
Faded that beauteous fragile flower,
The father's features gathered gloom
From the dark shadows of the tomb?
And, when the agonising gasp
Told of Death's latest, firmest grasp;
When, not like one who courts repose,
But tossing wild with fearful throes,
And uttering shrieks at each new pang
Whose echoes through the mansion rang,—
When thus, to the worst form of death,
The boy had yielded up his breath,
Had they not seen him torn away,
Still clinging to the lifeless clay;
And heard the accents of despair
Which told his all had perished there?

Yes, the sad story of his woe
Has caused full many a tear to flow;

And gossips love to tell the tale
 When winter's evening shades prevail,
 And prove an unacknowledged joy
 To find that wealth has its alloy,
 And e'en the lordly and the great
 Must share the universal fate:—
 "But time," the unthinking world would say,
 "Long time since then has passed away;
 "And time can minister relief
 "To souls most bowed by weight of grief."
 True; the deep wound upon his heart
 Did lose its pungency of smart:
 True; he could join the manly sport,
 Frequent new scenes, appear at court:
 Yet, when among gay revellers found,
 While glass and goblet passed around,
 And the loud laugh and jovial song
 Strove which should most the mirth prolong;
 Then would there oft unbidden rise
 Hot scalding tears and deep-drawn sighs,
 As some unlooked for, trivial thing
 Waked the vibrations of that string,
 Whose deeply melancholy tone
 Breathed but one thought,—“My son, my son!”

But away, away with desponding care,
 With this pale-faced grief, and wan despair!
 Lo, Mercy descends to earth again;
 And with her Hope's gay and laughing train!
 And see how she bears with encircling arm
 A babe whose beauty grim Death might charm!

And again, with that well-remembered joy,
 The father embraces an infant boy,
 Whose sunny smile, by no shadow crossed,
 Can more than replace the idol lost.

Then spread ye the banquet's ample store!
 Spread it for rich, and spread it for poor!
 Bid the young and old, with merry heart,
 Hasten to bear in the feast their part!
 Nor fear ye though Midnight stoop to hear
 Your song of joy and your hearty cheer.

This day we consecrate to Heaven
 The blessing so benignly given.
 This day we house him in the ark;
 This day we seal him with the mark
 Worn by the "sacramental host,"—
 The proud world's scorn, the good man's boast!
 Well then may heaven itself rejoice!
 Well may the earth lift up her voice!
 Well may the Church aloud proclaim
 "The second birth," "the Christian name."

But see yon modest dwelling, dressed
 With care and skill beyond the rest;
 As if its inmates strove to show
 A more than sympathetic glow
 Within their happy bosoms burned,
 For blessings which themselves concerned.
 Its quiet aspect, placed between
 The proudly great and poorly mean,

Tells not indeed of gorgeous wealth,
 But of peace, competence, and health.
 The close cut hedge, the gay parterre,
 No mercenary hand declare.—
 The orchard's promising increase,
 The dog reclining at his ease,
 The bird that struts his life away,
 Proud his gay plumage to display;—
 All, all proclaim that easy state
 Envied alike by small and great,
 That golden mediocrity,
 From pining as from surfeit free.

Within that home of peace reside
 A lover and his happy bride;
 So closely knit in love's own bond,
 So free from every thought beyond,
 That but one spirit seems to dwell
 In both their frames, one magic spell
 With mystic influence to control
 Each thought and feeling of each soul.

Perchance, indeed, to one who knew
 To search man's nature through and through,
 There might appear upon his side
 Too much of that stern manly pride,
 That walks the earth with stately tread
 And lifts sublime to heaven its head,
 As if, in conscience of its worth,
 It scorned the meaner things of earth:—
 That feels no pity for the price
 Which, soon or late, men pay for vice;

That joys, as Mercy doth, to bless,
 And weeps at innocent distress;
 But cannot, like that angel, stoop
 To lift a prostrate sinner up.—

Perchance her soul too feebly hung
 Upon his strength; too closely clung
 For safety to his sheltering arm,
 On danger's most remote alarm.
 It seemed as if the self-same blow
 That struck at him must lay her low;
 As if even God Himself she feared,
 Chiefly because he too revered.
 Yet blame them not; 'twas but the excess
 Of virtue dimmed their loveliness;
 And e'en the sun is said to show
 Some dark spots 'midst his burning glow.

Not yet twelve months had rolled away
 Since dawned the memorable day
 That placed the bridegroom by the side
 Of his own chosen, cherished bride,
 When neighbors crowded round to see
 The first sweet smile of infancy,
 And on the unconscious lips to press
 The gentle kiss of tenderness.

Poor fragile flower! they little knew
 Who o'er it bent their earnest view,
 What gathering tempests would arise
 In after years to cloud its skies;

Till the wild fury of the storm
Burst on its frail and shrinking form.—

'Twas on the day, when first with joy
Yon proud lord had embraced his boy,
That first his humbler tenant prest
An infant daughter to his breast;
And willed that lord that the same hour
Should see each consecrated flower
Transferred from nature's barren waste,
And, by the rite baptismal, placed
Within the Church's hallowed bounds,—
Those fertile, sheltered, happy grounds,—
Where each young tree of Paradise
Blossoms ere transplanted to the skies.

Ye who would contemplate a sight
Which angels gaze on with delight,
And more than angels from above
Deign to rejoice in and approve;—
Look on that consecrated place!
Look on that minister of grace!
Look on that pure baptismal stream
All radiant with a kindly beam
From Mercy's own benignant eyes,
As wide she opens Paradise!
Look on those infants, for whose fate
Heaven, Earth, and Hell expectant wait!—
Angels—to guard their course through life,
And shield them 'mid its dreadful strife:

Or waft them swift from earth away
 To regions of unclouded day.
 Parents—whose every hope, and fear,
 And joy, and grief are centred there:
 Demons—to blast their opening bloom
 With sin's dark stain, and Hell's deep gloom;
 To make their ruined souls a curse,
 A plague-spot in the universe,
 Till God, in mercy to the race,
 Bid Death the damning blot efface.

Oh! if we welcome with applause
 The man who in a righteous cause
 Seizes on sword, and spear, and shield,
 And rushes to the battle-field,
 Careless though 'mid the heaps of slain
 His own unburied corpse remain:—
 If with delight we view the maid,
 Now first in nuptial garb arrayed,
 Who speaks the irrevocable word
 That gives her to her bosom's lord:—
 Say, shall not equal praise be given
 To him who wields the sword of heaven;
 And by the sacred sign he bears
 Upon his brow true fealty swears
 In life, in death, through gain, through loss,
 To him who triumphed on the cross?—
 Say, shall not equal joys arise
 For souls new-wedded to the skies,
 Who spotless as the robes they wear,
 In virgin innocence appear,

To be presented to their lord,
The Church's husband,—and her God!

But ah! what prescient eye can scan
The distant future of the man,
On whose unconscious baby brow
The sacred drops are falling now?
Shall the wide world resound his fame?
Or echo with his guilt and shame?
Or shall he, like some drifting bark,
Float o'er life's sea, nor leave one mark,
One single furrow on the wave
Betwixt his baptism and his grave?

Perchance that little rosy lip
In after years may fondly sip
The cup of pleasurable sin,
And, with it, drink damnation in.
Perchance that tiny hand we see
Feebly stretched out towards vacancy,
May one day grasp the reeking blade
With human slaughter crimson made,
And fling the devastating brand
O'er many a fair and smiling land.
That voice, now uttering fretful cries,
In burning eloquence may rise
To thrill a nation with its tone,
Or hurl a monarch from his throne:
Or (dreadful thought!) may utter loud,
'Midst impious folly's laughing crowd,

The bold defiance 'gainst High Heaven,
 Nor breathe one prayer to be forgiven.
 That infant form may rise to wear
 A weight of glory even here:—
 Amid its generation stand
 Diffusing blessings round the land;
 Chase, like the glorious orb of day,
 The mists of sin and grief away,
 And cause the admiring world to see
 How bright a Christian's course may be;
 By bad men feared, by good men loved,
 By conscience and by God approved:—
 May, after death, still higher rise,
 There, there, where angels walk the skies;
 And view with unobscured sight
 The effulgence of the Eternal Light.

That infant form may prostrate lie
 In sloth, in vice, in infamy;
 Spread, with its pestilential breath,
 That worst of plagues, a moral death;—
 Be praised by none, by none be loved,
 By conscience hourly be reprov'd;
 Feel in its inmost soul the dread
 Of vengeance falling on its head;
 And sink at last (how darkly deep!)
 Down, down for ever; still to weep,
 Long as the weary ages roll,
 The ruin of a deathless soul.—

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The rites performed, with serious thought imprest,
 Sober, not sad, returns each welcome guest
 To share the bounties of his generous lord,
 And meet around his hospitable board.
 All crown the goblet, the sweet nectar quaff,
 Sing the glad song, and raise the cheerful laugh;
 Then join the dance, and, to the varied sound
 Of string and pipe, tread the fantastic round;
 Not anxious for display, but only bent
 To give expression to their hearts' content;—
 And some, 'tis said, whose dancing days were o'er,
 On this occasion danced again once more.
 Light was each foot, and sparkled every eye,
 Swift flew the merry hours unheeded by,
 Till, as the village clock, with solemn tone,
 Warned that another fleeting day was gone,
 Back to the banquet-hall the guests repair,
 Once more its hospitalities to share.
 The banquet o'er, uprose the man of God,
 And spread his suppliant hands to heaven abroad,
 And, with a voice of dignity and love,
 Invoked on all a blessing from above.

Just then, a stranger through the portal slowly entered,
 On whose gaunt form the eyes of each with awe
 were centered.
 In gloomy contrast with this scene of chastened
 gladness,
 Her every look and feature wore a hue of sadness.

The crimson stream of life had lost its power to
 redden

Her hollow cheek; her eye was lustreless and
 leaden.

Onward she moved, and seemed it that she little
 heeded

How each, with look of fear as she advanced, re-
 ceded.

Onward she moved until she stood beside the
 father,

The mansion's noble lord, then seemed her soul to
 gather

New fervency of passion, and new stern decision;
 And thus she spake, and, speaking, smiled as in
 derision:—

“Happy man! While you can,
 Revel in your joy;

Still caress And fondly press
 Your pretty baby boy!

Wretched man! Could you scan
 Dark futurity,

You would say, ‘Woe worth the day
 Gave that boy to me!’

Love how great! Deadly hate!
 Both their forms I see.—

“Spare my life!”—‘Nay, whet the knife;
 Vengeance calls for thee.’”

Onward she moved, nor stayed until she stood,
 Beside that other father; while his blood

Grew cold within his veins, and paled his cheek
 As waited he the words she yet might speak.

But see how changed a form she bears !
 Mark how her eyes are filled with tears !
 And list, with what a plaintive moan
 She chants these words in softened tone :—

“There was a flower In Beauty’s bower,
 Lovely in form and hue ;
 Now dimly seen Through foliage green,
 Now hidden from the view.
 In evil hour About that flower
 A wily serpent coiled,
 Whose poisonous breath With taint of death
 Its virgin beauties soiled.—

“I saw from far A twinkling star
 Beam in the evening sky ;
 Whose timid light, So meekly bright,
 Shrunk from the gazing eye.
 There came a cloud With gloom to enshroud
 That unobtrusive ray ;
 And, quenched in night, The modest light
 Passed from the scene away.—

“O guard from harms Those opening charms,
 So transient and so dear ;
 For storms will rise In summer skies,
 And there’s a serpent near !”—

Onward she moved to the grave priest ; and, by him
 standing,
 Said, with an attitude and tone of voice com-
 manding,

As felt she that prophetic words to her were given,
And that she too could claim authority from
heaven:—

“Stretched there a sea All brilliantly;
I stood upon its shore;
And as I stood It turned to blood;
Deep crimson human gore.

“And forth there came, In lurid flame,
The hideous form of DEATH;
With visage thin, And ghastly grin,
And hot devouring breath.

“Then spake the Dead These words of dread
In deep sepulchral tone;—
‘The hour is come, The hour of doom,
The hour that’s all mine own.

“‘A feast I’ll have In the silent grave,
Such as the world ne’er saw;
And the rich and great In the Church and State
To my slaughterhouse I’ll draw.

“‘See my table spread With the mighty dead,
And with young and lusty forms!
And a crowned king Shall his carcass bring
To the banquet of the worms.

“‘See a woman’s hand Uplift the brand
That kindles the murderous strife!

And, lo, at her word They unsheathe the sword,
And whet the avenging knife!

“But, ha! she shrinks, And her right arm sinks
As though paralysed its force:—
Who, who could scare Thee, my priestess fair,
And arrest thy glorious course?

“Seize the recreant! bind her fast!
Shroud her soul in midnight gloom!
Then, when twice ten years are passed,
Fling her to the tomb!’—

“With the lightning’s flash, And the thunder’s
crash,
And the ravings of the storm,
And a demon’s howl, And a darkening scowl,
Down went that spectral form.”—

* * * * *

The feast is o’er; the lights are out;
Hushed is the laugh, the song, the shout;
The guests are parted, none remain
Of all that gay, that startled train:—
But few, I ween, their eyes could close
That night in undisturbed repose:
For if, outworn, awhile they slept,
Soon dreadful visions o’er them crept,
Of grinning skulls, and seas of blood,
And spectral forms that round them stood;

And starting from their sleep, they cry,
 "Save us, O God, the doom is nigh!"

And there were two, who vainly strove
 The burden from their hearts to move
 Of half allowed, half scouted dread,
 There lying like a weight of lead.
 And chief the man who fondly prest
 The infant Théroigne to his breast,
 And heard, still echoing to his thought,
 These words with fear and caution fraught;—

"O guard from harms Those opening charms,
 So transient and so dear;
 For storms will rise In summer skies,
 And there's a serpent near!"

END OF PART I.

THEROIGNE DE MERICOURT;

A Romance,

IN FIVE PARTS,

BY

LOUIS S. D. REES.

PART II.

Philadelphia:

WILLIS P. HAZARD,

178 CHESNUT STREET.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by
LOUIS S. D. REES,
in the Office of the Clerk of the District Court of the United States, in
and for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

INQUIRER BOOK PRESS, 57 SOUTH THIRD STREET, PHILADELPHIA.

TO SQUIRE LITTELL, M. D.

SIR,

It is now about five or six years since I was placed under your professional care, for a complaint which threatened to terminate in blindness.

Certain of receiving no pecuniary recompence, and uncertain of meeting with even the poor return of gratitude, you nevertheless watched over my case with all that skill for which you are so justly renowned, and with all that kindly solicitude, which only true Christian principle could inspire: and it is to you (under God) that I am indebted for the ability to write the following lines with my own hand, and to read them with my own eyes.

I gladly avail myself, therefore, of the opportunity of expressing thus publicly my sense of the obligation under which you have laid me, by dedicating to you this Second Part of a "Romance," which, whatever may be its defects, is endeared to me by the subject of which it treats, and the circumstances under which it originated.

I am, Sir,

With much respect and gratitude,

Your very obedient servant,

LOUIS S. D. REES.



THEROIGNE DE MERICOURT.

A ROMANCE.

PART II.

O for a Seraph's voice to sing
The sceptre of that hoary king,
Whose wide dominion spreads abroad
O'er all but the Eternal God!
Far as the flaming walls extend,
That mark Creation's utmost end;
Deep as the deepest pit of Hell,
(That central gloom where traitors dwell;)
High as the place at God's right hand,
Where Gabriel claims to take his stand;—
So far, so wide, so high, so deep
Extends his empire's ample sweep.

Ask ye the story of his birth?—
Go, seek it in the caves of earth:
There, by the aid of science, scan
(Long ere the human race began)
The hidden geologic page,
Whose records tell, from age to age,

Not when and where some hero dwelt,
 Whose influence through the world was felt;—
 Felt? aye, and heard, in captive moans,
 In shrieks of pain, in dying groans;—
 Not how a nation rose to power,
 Ruled o'er mankind for one short hour,
 Then sunk beneath the common lot,
 Enervated,—destroyed,—forgot;—
 But how, through slowly rolling years,
 A new race comes, then disappears;
 How here the liquid plains extend,
 There mountains from the depths ascend;
 How scales thrown off from tiny worms
 Slow rose into gigantic forms,
 That stand, and shall through ages stand,
 Time's monuments in many a land;
 How Nature, as in sportive mood,
 Hath oft-times changed the field, the flood;
 Hath spread a continent abroad
 Where erst the waves of ocean roared,
 Or sunk the smiling land again
 Deep down, beneath the barren main : *
 How through this restless roll of years,
 The same All-glorious God appears
 Seated upon his awful throne,
 Serene, eternal, and alone :—
 Go, scan that page; 'tis all in vain;
 There shall ye see, indeed, Time's reign,
 And, as ye upward strive to mount
 The scale of ages past all count,

* ατρυγματοῦ θαλάσσης.

Still shall ye find, on either hand,
 The tokens of his being stand;
 But when he first began to be,
 Is wrapped in hopeless mystery.

Would ye foreknow the distant hour
 When Time himself shall lose his power?
 Shall lay his crown and sceptre by,
 And, like his slaughtered myriads, die?—
 Seek not that mystery to explore;
 Know, "Time is mortal;"—ask no more.
 His doomsday is beyond the ken
 Alike of angels and of men;
 And the last trumpet's voice alone
 Shall make the dreadful secret known.

All-glorious King! thy banner flies
 Outstretched upon the starry skies;
 The sun, proud sovereign of the day,
 Holds forth a torch to light thy way;
 The comet's wild and rapid sweep
 Is but thy slow and measured step;
 The music of the distant spheres
 Is waked to please thy royal ears;
 And all things great, and good, and fair
 Thy will obey, thy power declare.
 And when thy latest hour is come,
 Shall it not bring Creation's doom?
 Shall not a sympathising world
 Howl when thou from thy throne art hurled?

And falling stars, and darkened sun,
 Mourn to be told thy race is run?
 Shall not a mighty angel stand,
 One foot on sea, and one on land,
 And lift his hand to heaven, and swear
 By Him who lives forever there,
 That Time's eventful scenes are o'er,
 And Time himself shall be no more?

And canst thou stoop so lowly down,
 As to behold with smile or frown,
 Creatures so transient and so mean,
 As we, who crawl this earthly scene?
 Yes, 'tis on earth thy power is shown;
 'Tis here thy mightiest works are known:
 Angels beneath thy reign receive
 The gift of life; but angels live
 Scarce conscious of thy feeble sway,
 Nor share thy triumph or decay:
 And demons know, (alas! too well,)
 That, 'whether 'neath thy rule they dwell,
 Or trembling thy successor see—
 That last of kings!—Eternity!
 The worm, the dungeon, and the flame
 Remain unchangeably the same.
 Hopeless of good, chained down to ill,
 Still restless, miserable still,
 They dread alike the avenging rod
 Of Time,—Eternity,—or God!
 But here, on earth, there's not a flower
 Which does not feel thy withering power;

There's not a single blade of grass
 But trembles as thy footsteps pass;
 While towering cliffs, that pierce the sky,
 Fall prostrate as thou movest by.
 And chiefly man, though formed to be
 As deathless as the Deity,
 And, through eternity, to dwell
 In God's own Heaven, or Satan's Hell;
 In this his nonage, like a child,
 The sport of all thy fancies wild,
 Is made each day, each hour, to feel
 Time's power to wound, Time's power to heal.

And yet, as weary of thy reign,
 Oft will thou stoop in sport, and deign
 To act the wizard's part;
 With wand in hand through nature range,
 And show, by many a wondrous change,
 Thy skill in magic art.

Touched by that wand, the seed minute
 Shall rise into a tree, whose root
 Strikes deep into the soil;
 Or forests vast shall die away,
 And, after ages of decay,
 Reward the miner's toil.

Touched by that wand, the beggared wretch,
 Changed to a king, his rule shall stretch
 Wide o'er a prostrate world;

While thrones which have for ages stood,
 Stained with the monarch's sacred blood,
 Shall to the dust be hurled.

Touched by that wand, the smile of peace,
 So brightly beautiful, shall cease,
 The merry laugh be hushed;
 And deep-drawn sighs of woe shall speak,
 And lines along the faded cheek
 Shall show where tears have gushed.

Touched by that wand, the festive hall,
 Where late, in revelry and ball,
 There moved a giddy crowd,
 Becomes as silent as the grave;
 And young, and beautiful, and brave.
 Are mantled in a shroud.

But time itself would fail, to tell
 What wonders, by his magic spell,
 The wizard Time hath wrought;
 Nor countless volumes could contain
 The annals of his busy reign,
 With good or evil fraught.

I've felt his power, I feel it now;
 Beneath its iron weight I bow,
 And uselessly repine:—
 Where is my own, my native land?
 Where is the social, kindred band,
 Once fondly, firmly mine?

Have I not seen the funeral pall
 By Time stretched out, by Time let fall
 O'er those who gave me breath?
 Have I not seen full many a friend
 Down, down into the grave descend,
 The prison-house of Death?

E'en now, in presence of the King,
 Vainly I strive his power to sing,
 His wonders to recount:
 Pale Penury, and frowning Care,
 And spectred Hopes, and stern Despair
 Forbid my soul to mount.

Fool! raise thy window; look below;
 Behold the crowds that come and go
 Along yon busy street:
 And would'st thou lay thy bosom bare,
 In hope from such as wander there
 With sympathy to meet?

The toiling race, athirst for gold,
 If of thy cares and sorrows told,
 Would smile in proud disdain;
 And Pleasure's giddy throng would not,
 Though thou should'st starve, and die, and rot
 Feel e'en a transient pain.

Sweet Méricourt! of late in thee I found
 Rest for my spirit, wearied with the sound
 Of maniac shrieks, and ravings of despair
 Harshly intruding on the tranquil air;

And now again to thee with joy I turn,
 For refuge from the thoughts that in me burn.
 Gladly I hail, just looming on my sight,
 Though distant yet, the reverend castle's height:
 Gladly I see, advancing now more near,
 The lordly mansion on the hill appear:
 And now the dwelling, where we viewed of late
 The father brooding o'er his daughter's fate;
 And now, more beautiful than all the rest,
 Those rural cottages, no longer drest
 With festive wreaths, but rising to the view
 In their own modest garb of virgin hue.
 Nature smiles still, as smiled she on that day,
 Though many a year since then has passed away.
 See there the hills, as then, with verdure crowned,
 And the same gorgeous gilding spread around:
 See there, like fairy sprite, the day's glad beam
 Dance on the surface of the sparkling stream:
 The flocks and herds still stud the distant fields,
 And revel on the sweets their herbage yields;
 While the same rural sounds to memory dear,
 Glide through the open portal of my ear.

Why all unchanged remains this lovely spot?
 Hath Time his sceptre and his wand forgot?
 Or hath it pleased him these sweet scenes to spare,
 In honor of the beauteous smile they wear?

Ah! no; it is the summit of his art
 To leave unchanged the whole, yet change each
 part;

From the vast fabric, one by one, to take
 Each stone, each beam, each brick that helped to
 make

Its fair proportions, yet to let it stand
 As if it bid defiance to his hand:

To sweep each individual from the stage,
 Yet let the race remain from age to age.
 Those flocks and herds that crop the field's rich
 store,

Are not the same which met our gaze before;
 Each bleating sheep has, at the call of man,
 Yielded its fleecy robe, its life's short span;
 Each sturdy ox that bowed beneath the yoke,
 Has bowed still lower to the fatal stroke;
 And golden grain, and tree, and herb, and flower,
 All, all have felt Time's unresisted power.

Go, wander o'er yon consecrated ground,
 With here a cross, and there a grassy mound;
 See now plain prose, and now aspiring rhyme,
 All telling of the potency of Time.

Read how that aged man, who battled long
 Against his power, while expectation strong
 Still urged him to maintain the unequal strife,
 Yielded at last the contest with his life.

Read how, yet glorying in their youthful prime,
 This son, that daughter were cut off by Time.

Read how the infant, first-born pledge of love,
 Descending like an angel from above,
 Saw the dread King, and trembled at the sight,
 Spread its cherubic wings abroad and took its flight.

You start:—but wherefore? Know you not you
 roam

Amid the scenes of your own future home?
 See you not all around your brethren stand,—
 Unbodied spirits,—and with shadowy hand
 Point to the cypress and the yew, that wave,
 In growing grandeur, o'er your deepening grave?

Enter yon cottages; there, too, you'll see
 The tokens of Time's ceaseless agency:
 See helpless infants changed to men robust;
 See sturdy swains now tottering o'er the dust;
 See lads and lasses, matrons now and sires,
 With lads and lasses round their social fires;
 See Théroigne, heroine of this truthful tale,
 Not now a smiling infant in yon vale,
 But rich in all the concentrated grace,
 That gives such lustre to the woman's face.

O a joyous sight Is the morning light,
 Just gilding the eastern sky,
 When the night clouds blush, And away they rush
 From the day-god's burning eye.
 O a lovely thing Is the early Spring,
 Smiles and tears are on her face:
 For she flies in alarm From cold Winter's arm
 To the Summer's warm embrace.

Yet the morning ray Is less gladly gay,
 With its modest, blushing light,
 Than the golden beams Whose effulgence streams
 From the sun at its noontide height;

And the early spring Never yet could bring,
 With its sunshine and its showers,
 Such a deep delight As the summer bright
 With its fruits and gorgeous flowers.

And the wayward child, With her fancies wild,
 And her step so glad and free,
 Is an earthly sight That an angel might
 From the heavens look down to see.
 Yet shall Time impart To that youthful heart
 Holy thoughts it knows not now ;
 And his hand shall throw A diviner glow
 O'er the woman's lovelier brow.—

O for the men, who on the historic page
 Still stand, the wonder of each passing age,
 Skilled to portray on canvas, or in stone,
 Nature's sublime creations and their own!
 O for thy pencil, Reynolds; or for thine,
 Immortal Lawrence; or, (if verse of mine
 May pay a passing tribute to a name
 Destined, perchance, to stand as high in fame,)
 Thine, Richmond, still embalming to our eye
 Benignant Wilberforce, and sainted Fry !
 O for thy chisel, Powers, at whose touch
 The dull cold marble wakes, to tell how much
 Of beauty lovely woman may retain,
 E'en when she groans beneath the oppressor's chain !
 'Twould need your art, 'twould need your arts com-
 bined,
 Your skill most potent, genius most refined,

To set before our view a form and face
 Rich in each charm, adorned with every grace;
 Where womanhood its finish had bestowed
 On all that brightly shone, or warmly glowed.

O why doth God, perfect in all His ways,
 Take such delight a monument to raise
 Of his own power, then dash it to the ground,
 And strew the glittering fragments all around?
 Why doth He light a meteor in the sky
 To flash but for an instant, and to die?
 Why is a Samson made at last to grind
 In the low dungeon, wretched, weak, and blind?
 Why is the infant wrought with magic art,
 And made so beautiful in every part,
 Placed in its mother's arms, then torn away,
 And left to worms and rottenness a prey?
 Why doth the flower invite the wondering view
 By graceful symmetry, or gorgeous hue;
 Then, nipped by frosts, or scorched by burning heat,
 Fall withered, worthless at the admirer's feet?

And thou, sweet flower of Méricourt's sweet vale,
 Fair as the lily, and, alas, as frail,
 Why wast thou formed in nature's finest mould,
 Of height commanding, yet not sternly bold;
 Of easy dignity in step and mien,
 Not fearing, nor desiring, to be seen?
 Why those dark locks of glossy clustering hair,
 Parted on either side a brow so fair,
 Shading the lustre of its pearly white,
 Like sable clouds around the queen of night?

Why too those coral lips?—the ivory hue
 Of teeth, from whose enclosure oft there flew
 Sweet sounds melodious, and swift-winged words,
 Like warbling, happy, disencaged birds? *
 Why ——? But why vainly would my pencil try
 To paint such outward charms as meet the eye?
 Charms in which, oft, the meanest worm that crawls,
 Excels the maid adored in princely halls.
 Say rather, wherefore doth her soul of fire
 Still restless towards the great, the good aspire?
 Why do her spirit's wings still beat the air,
 In the sweet labor their high charge to bear
 Farther and farther from earth's shades away,
 To heaven's ethereal, unbecclouded day?
 Why such a heart so generous and so true?
 A heart where even Deity might view,
 As in a mirror guiltless of a stain,
 His own pure light reflected back again?

Behold yon eagle in his lofty flight,
 Now soaring far above the mountain's height;
 See how he fixes his unflinching gaze
 Upon the burning sun's meridian blaze;
 And still mounts up, as though he sought on high
 His dwelling-place, his home in that bright sky.
 But, lo, he sinks! the too ethereal air
 Refuses e'en his buoyant form to bear;
 And now some thoughtless hand lets fly the dart
 That wounds his pinions or assails his heart;

* ποιον επος φυζην ηρκος οδονταν. — *Homer.*

Down, down he falls to earth; his plumage stained
 With his own blood, his lofty flight restrained,
 Henceforth within some narrow prison-cage,
 Whose bars he beats with ineffectual rage;
 Or a vile carcase rotting on the ground,
 With nought but worms and carrion-crows around.

And thou too, Théroigne, lovely as thou art,
 Lovely alike in form, in mind, in heart,
 Shalt yet be seen a spectacle of woe,
 Changed, O how totally! fallen, O how low!
 Till in the grave, the wretch's only rest,
 Thou lay thee down, by shame and guilt opprest;
 Till in the presence of the God above,
 Perfect in justice, perfect, too, in love,
 Thou hand the record in, thy life's account,
 And wait the word that bids thee sink or mount.

What art thou, but a hapless victim led
 To slaughter, with gay wreaths about its head?
 What art thou but that eagle in its flight,
 Still soaring upwards with renewed delight,
 Fixing thy soul's unhesitating gaze
 On forms of splendor, such as thought can raise,
 When, turning from this dull depressing earth,
 As if in conscience of her heavenly birth,
 She views with inward eye the Good Supreme,
 And basks beneath His vivifying beam?

But thou ere long shalt sink to earth again,
 Feel life's rude shocks, and wear its galling chain;

Hide in thy inmost soul the envenomed dart
 Of shame, grief, vengeance, rankling in thy heart;
 Weep, till the fountain of thy tears be dry;
 Sigh, till thy bosom lose its power to sigh;
 Shudder, when wrapped around with mental gloom,
 And long, but long in vain, to find a tomb.

* * * * *

“To horse and away! To horse and away!
 With the earliest blush of the morning;
 While the lark rises high In the beautiful sky,
 To welcome the light at its dawning.

“The lord of the day Drives the shadows away,
 And the spirits of darkness affrighted,
 Slink back to the deep, As he rises from sleep,
 And the earth by his presence is lighted.

“O why should we choose In dull slumber to lose
 The moments so rich in enjoyment,
 When nature awakes, And her dewy locks shakes,
 And goes forth to her varied employment.

“I’ll not linger here, While the gay chanticleer
 To his dames is so loudly proclaiming,
 As he flaps his glad wings And his clarion rings,
 That the East with the daylight is flaming.

“I’ll mount my good steed, And away will I speed
 To drink the fresh air of the morning;

To view the fair scene In its mantle of green,
 And the dew-drops that mantle adorning;
 "To hear the glad song Of the feathery throng,
 All swelling one rapturous chorus,
 Where each merry voice Seems to bid us rejoice,
 And partake of the banquet before us."—

Yes, nursed upon the lap of wealth,
 Rich in youth, energy, and health,
 Well may that mansion's heir delight,
 When Morning climbs the eastern height,
 To mark the greeting smiles that grace
 Awakened Nature's beaming face :
 For sweet it is to view the sun,
 Ere yet his course is well begun,
 Turning his youthful, amorous gaze
 With ardor on the misty haze;
 And see with what a roseate hue
 In heaven the clouds, on earth the dew,
 Blush as they meet his burning eye,
 Embrace him, and, embracing, die :
 To see, where'er our foot hath been,
 Each blade of grass more freshly green,
 As if our every cheerful pace
 Wiped off some tears from Nature's face;
 Or leave the unsullied crystal drop
 Still trembling on the leafy top,
 Fearful, lest every passing gust
 Should lay its radiance in the dust:

Sweet, too, on every side to view
 The flaunting poppy's gaudy hue,
 Or daisy couched on verdure rank,
 Or violet blue on shady bank,
 Or wild convolvulus, or rose,
 Not reared by man, but such as throws
 Its blossoms o'er the scented thorn,
 To share its fragrance, and adorn.
 Sweet is the carol of the lark,
 Soaring aloft while yet 'tis dark,
 And seeming from those distant clouds
 To welcome day; as up the shrouds
 The nimble sailor runs to seek
 For looming beacon, tower, or peak,—
 Then shouts to those who listening stand,
 "Hurrah! my boys; there's land! there's land!"
 And sweet, too, is the tuneless lay
 Of young birds chirping on the spray;
 Whose merry notes less liquid rise,
 But not less welcome to the skies.
 Sweet is the fragrance, too, of morn;
 The new-mown hay, the standing corn,
 Or the rich perfume, that each flower
 Yields at this consecrated hour,
 And flings upon the gale abroad,
 For incense to the throne of God.
 O could I strike the sacred lyre
 They struck who walked unharmed in fire,
 Or thine, thou glory of our tongue,
 Whose voice, in notes seraphic, sung
 The wonders of creative power,
 As viewed from Eden's nuptial bower;

I'd echo to the joyous strain
 Of warbling bird and cheerful swain,
 And bid all nature rise and sing
 The praises of the Eternal King.

He has mounted his horse without sorrow or care;
 He is hasting away Nature's bounty to share
 In the beautiful scene, and the genial air,

And the thousand attractions of morning;—
 He shall feel in his heart, when he comes back again,
 The torturing bliss, and the exquisite pain,
 (Too intense to express, too profound to explain,)
 Of love in its earliest dawning.

O why doth the god, so resistless in power,
 Still force his rude way to the innocent flower,
 And seize it so roughly, that oft in an hour
 It loses its freshness and bloom?

O why doth he hold o'er the thoughtless and gay
 A torch that but lends them a flickering ray,
 Shines on till their footsteps have wandered astray,
 Then leaves them enshrouded in gloom?

O why doth he mingle, like Chaos of old,*
 The stern and the yielding, the fervent and cold,
 The poor with the wearer of purple and gold,
 The cowardly heart with the brave?

Why sighs the rough peasant to whisper his vow
 To the maid with a coronet circling her brow?

* "Corpore in uno frigida pugnabant calidis, &c.—*Ovid*."

And why does the monarch in suppliance bow
At the feet of his beautiful slave?

Is Love then a tyrant? and doth he delight
To enkindle a flame but to quench it in night?
To raise us by hope, then to fling from its height
To despondency's gloomy abyss?

Ah! no; but he scorns the distinctions of earth
And would teach us that beauty, and genius, and
worth

Are the things that, in peasant or prince, must give
birth

To the soul's highest rapture of bliss.

'Tis man, ruthless man, who, with merciless hand,
Untwists the silk cords of Love's roseate band,
Dissevers the unions benignantly planned
To lighten life's burden of care;

Nay, seizes remorselessly on the young heart
That clings to another as part clings to part,
And rends it asunder with torturing smart,
Then leaves it all bleeding and bare.

And why?—Because here, gifts of fortune abound,
And the head of a fool with a diadem is crowned;
There, beauty ungilded, untitled is found;—

And should not the wise interfere?—

Yet wisdom like this can behold, with a smile,
Sweet Innocence wedded to fraudulent Guile,
And the gentle and pure to the brutal and vile,
Nor let fall one pitying tear.

O hard-hearted parents ! 'twere better by far
 Ye hurled your poor child 'neath the swift-rolling
 car,

To cripple her members, her features to mar;
 ('Twould cause less of sorrow and sin;) 1807 F 4
 Than doom her to linger through year after year,
 With no one to strengthen, and no one to cheer,
 Forbidden to tell, by a sigh or a tear,
 The grief that is gnawing within.——

But where is Théroigne? Doth the fleecy cloud
 Of dreamless slumber still her soul enshroud?
 Or hears she yet, though sunk in calm repose,
 The murmurs of that mystic stream that flows
 Around the intellectual souls whose lofty thought,
 Sleeping or waking, with high things is fraught;—
 That stream of inspiration and of bliss,
 Rising in other worlds, and watering this ?

She slumbers not; for soon as morning dawns
 It is her wont to seek the dewy lawns,
 Or saunter in the garden, or descend
 To where the shepherds on their flocks attend,
 Or lowing herds with generous bounty yield
 The snowy nectar of the fragrant field,—
 Nectar, by art which Nature only knows,
 Extracted from the simplest herb that grows.
 And some there are in flock and herd, who share
 The blessing of her own peculiar care:—
 The gentle cow that licks her well-known hand,
 The sheep, though simple, skilled to understand

The eye benignant, and the kindly word,
 The soothing stroke, the lap with dainties stored.
 See, too, the feathered throng, in eager haste
 Her wonted dole of Cereal sweets to taste,
 All gathering round the threshold where she stands,
 And casts the grain abroad with liberal hands;
 Nor fear they lest her kindness should reprove
 The little tokens of their trusting love;
 But peck her fingers, perch upon her arm,
 Feel her soft touch, unconscious of alarm.——

* * * * *

The youthful lord has pleased his eye
 With the fair scenes that round him lie.
 With tossing head, and flying mane,
 His noble steed has scoured the plain;
 Down the green slope has swiftly hied,
 Or climbed the rugged mountain's side,
 Or through the woods, with cautious tread,
 Has turned some dubious path to thread,
 Here opening on a sunny glade,
 There hid by overhanging shade;
 Or beat the turfy road, between
 Embroidered banks, or hedge-rows green:
 And horse and rider both, at length,
 Would fain alike recruit their strength
 By short repose and homely fare,
 Such as may suit the morning air.——

“See, see, Acacie, right in view;”——
 Well the proud steed those accents knew,

And pricked his all but vocal ears,
Pleased at the cheerful tones he hears;—

“See there,” exclaims the youthful lord,

“A dwelling plentifully stored

“With all that constitutes a feast

“For hungry man, or hungry beast.”

He nears the house, he nears the gate,

He nears the crisis of his fate :

O might some angel interpose,

Prescient of swift-approaching woes,

And raise a barrier on his path

To coming bliss, and coming wrath !

But vain the wish ! the willing steed

Urges his way with quickened speed,

Like gallant ship, whose rapid course

O'er boundless oceans, speaks the force

Of Protean elements changing shape,

And struggling from man's grasp to escape.

Say rather like some hapless boat,

By careless hand allowed to float

Unchecked along that narrow stream,

Whose sportive waters little deem,

That but their silvery line divides

Two nations on the opposing sides,

For real strength and real worth

The best, the mightiest upon earth :

Careless,—unchecked,—afloat, between

Banks all arrayed in smiling green,

As if the shriek of mortal fear

Had never yet been uttered there ;

Though near at hand is heard the splash,
Of rapids, whence the waters dash
With frenzied ardor towards their doom,—
The cataract's leap,—the whirlpool's gloom!

O how a light and trivial thing
Is oftentimes found a train to bring
Of issues, whose untold amount
Eternity alone can count;
While well-laid plans, wrought out with care,
Float off in bubbles light as air!

O that, like him whose lustrous fame
(Athenæ's glory, and her shame)
Eclipses, by its radiance bright,
Full many a Christian's flickering light;—
O that, like him, we, too, could hear
The voice of some kind Genius near,
If not to tell what should be done,
At least to warn us what to shun:
To point us to the latent snare,
And whisper in our hearts,—“BEWARE!”

But did not Providence look down
With warning eye, and gathering frown?
Did Heaven and Earth all passive see
The onward march of Destiny:
Nor breathe one caution in his ear;
Nor strike one spark of latent fear?
Why doth his beast, so sure of foot,
Stumble against that gnarled root?

What means that momentary chill,
 Which even now a frame can thrill,
 In whose young veins life's crimson tide
 Is quickened by his morning ride?
 What means the ill-omened bird of night,
 Still wheeling its untimely flight;
 Or the black raven on yon gate
 Perched, as it would his coming wait?
 Perchance it were an idle dream,
 Such common accidents to deem
 Emblems to man of weal or woe:—
 Would this young lord had read them so!

But no; he rushes to his fate,
 With buoyant mind, and heart elate;
 Nor stops till, at the decent porch,
 Some unseen Fury lights her torch;
 While mystic bands of evil Powers
 Shout, though unheard, "The prey is ours!"

And yet how lovely was the scene!
 Above, the ethereal arch, serene
 Save where light clouds their fleeces threw,
 A lace-fall o'er a robe of blue:
 Around, in all her rich attire,
 Earth, scarce yet conscious of the fire
 Which even now begins to glow
 In yon bright orb, and soon will throw
 A beam, from whose meridian heat
 Both man and beast will fain retreat:—
 Before the porch the noble steed,
 True scion of the Arabian breed,

Whose every muscle seems to be
 Instinctive with life's energy:—
 His rider one, upon whose mien
 The impress of high birth is seen;
 Whose every gesture speaks a mind
 By polished intercourse refined:—
 Within that porch a beauteous maid,
 In homely morning garb arrayed,
 Yet standing like a form divine,
 Erect within its hallowed shrine;
 Or like some sculptor's masterpiece,
 Worthy the days of ancient Greece:
 Say rather, like some angel bright,
 Descended from the realms of light,
 And lingering on our earth awhile,
 To cheer us with its radiant smile,

Yet might ye see upon that face
 Too deep an intellectual trace,
 That darkened shade of earnest thought,
 The mind imparts when overwrought:
 Nay more, there was a saddened hue,
 As if some cloud of sorrow threw
 A shadow o'er that youthful brow,
 And dimmed its lustre even now.—
 Was it a kind of herald gloom
 Sent forward by her coming doom?—
 Was it because some tattling nurse
 Had taught her that prophetic verse,
 Whose mystic emblems seemed to be
 Pregnant with fearful destiny?—

Was it because awhile she'd dwelt,
 Within the convent's walls; and felt
 That ecstasy of joy and woe,
 With which impassioned spirits glow,
 Who vainly strive thy heights to climb,
 Eternity, while linked to Time?
 Was it because, e'en there, she found
 It was not always hallowed ground;
 That passions vile, or mean, or fierce,
 E'en through a convent's walls can pierce;
 And that the human heart and will,
 Hooded and cowled, are human still?—
 Was it that memory oft recalled
 The tale which once her heart appalled:
 Of the young nun, whose dying groan
 Was stifled by the wall of stone;
 Whose agonising prayer for grace,
 'Tis said, still echoes through the place,
 When Night her standard has unfurled,
 Or storms and tempests vex the world;
 When, 'mid the dungeon's rayless gloom
 Each spirit, from its mural tomb,
 Repeats the accents of despair
 Wrung from its heart when buried there?—
 Or does she fondly call to mind
 The sisterhood she left behind?
 And think upon the many there,
 Young, ardent like herself, and fair;
 Just fitted this life to enjoy,
 Yet doomed their every hour to employ

(Doomed by the irrevocable oath)
 In rites whose dull routine they loathe?—
 I wot not: God alone can tell
 What secret griefs each bosom swell;
 What clouds of sin and sorrow roll
 In darkness o'er each human soul!

And can such a heart Feel the exquisite smart,
 Of love, with its grief and its joy?
 And stoop from its height, To repel, or invite
 The shafts of the amorous Boy?

Go, mischievous child, To the thoughtless and wild,
 The shallow, the sportive, the gay;
 Who float o'er life's sea, Just as careless and free,
 As if Death would ne'er sweep them away:

Or kindle a flame On the heart dull and tame,
 And, for once, from an altar so vile
 Let an incense arise, That shall gladden the skies,
 And be welcomed by gods with a smile.

Go, beautiful boy, To the bashful and coy,
 Whose head, like a delicate flower,
 Hangs timidly down At thy smile or thy frown,
 And there show thy magical power!

Teach him to let slip, From a stammering lip,
 The avowal that costs him so dear;
 Teach her with a blush, From his ardor to rush,
 Yet to pause till again he draw near.*

* "Fugit ad salices, et se cupit ante videri."—*Virgil*.

But strive not in vain, With thy delicate chain
 Earth's loftier spirits to bind;
 Or to wound with thy dart The unsensual heart.
 Whose emotions are ruled by the mind!—

He hears me, and smiles; For he knows that his
 wiles
 Can subject any heart to his will;
 And with triumph he shows The long record of
 those
 Who, though wise, have attested his skill.

See the Tyrian queen, 'Mid the festival scene
 Embracing the counterfeit boy!—
 Ah! little she knows The unparalleled woes
 That shall spring from a transient joy!*

See Manoah's son, laid At the feet of the maid,
 Who is leagued with his deadliest foes;
 He discovers her guile, But he views her soft smile,
 And returns to his fatal repose.

See the monarch, whose name Has been wafted by
 fame
 To ages and nations remote,
 For the wisdom that shone From his ivory throne,
 And that lives in each stanza he wrote:

* "Interdum gremio fovet inscia Dido
 Insideat quantus miseræ Dens."—*Virgil*.

Yet wisdom like his Could not turn from the bliss
 That entrances each amorous youth;
 And the deeds of his age Leave a stain on the page,
 That still sullies the records of truth.

For Love knows full well, He must vary his spell
 With hearts of a various mould:
 He selects, ere he shoot, Just the dart that will suit
 Young and ardent, or sober and old.

He can bend, by his skill, The most obdurate will,
 The most volatile spirit control;
 He can kindle a fire Of impassioned desire,
 That shall warm the most ice-benumbed soul.

Should he seek to entwine Round a heart such as
 thine,

Thou flower of Méricourt's vale,
 The same chains that bind All the rest of mankind,
 For once the vain effort might fail.

Had the youth we behold Been rich only in gold,
 And ennobled by nought but his birth;
 Had the tinsel and show Such poor things can bestow,
 Been sustained by no genuine worth;

Then might Théroigne have heard, Like the song
 of a bird,

His eloquence poured in her ear;
 By its melody charmed, But as safe and unharmed,
 As if nought but sweet music were near:

Then might she have traced Every feature, that
graced

A countenance fair as her own,
With no feeling more warm Than in viewing a form
Which the sculptor had carved out of stone.

But she thought of the days, When his juvenile
praise

Might be heard at each cottager's door,
As the generous youth, Full of ardor and truth,
And the friend of the friendless and poor.

She remembers the time, When, with her, he would
climb

The pathway that leads up yon hill,
Where the ruinous height, Which was then their
delight,

Looks loftily down on them still:

When together they'd stray, Through the long
summer day,

In the dark wood, or o'er the green field;
While each trifle had power, In youth's fanciful
hour,

Some romantic adventure to yield.

She remembers the arm, Which, on slightest alarm,
Started forth to assist or defend;

And the well-deserved name, Which the proud boy
would claim,

Of her faithful, unchangeable friend.

True, there were some who smiled to see
 His condescending courtesy;
 And wondered that the lordly boy
 Should thus his vacant hours employ
 On one, whom the decrees of fate
 Had placed so far beneath his state.
 True, there were some, whose cautious fear
 Whispered in either parent's ear
 Dark hints of danger, distant yet,
 When hearts that now so fondly met,
 Though passionless, might feel at length,
 In all its unresisted strength
 That hidden fire, which burns and glows
 Most fiercely, where the fates oppose:—
 Lest he, in some unguarded hour,
 Should yield to Love's all-conquering power,
 And, stooping from his high estate,
 Wed him with one nor rich nor great:—
 Lest she, like many a hapless maid,
 Courted and won—enjoyed—betrayed—
 Might thus behold those clouds arise,
 Whose darkening gloom should veil her skies;
 Might find in him that serpent foe
 Destined to lay her beauties low.

But little recked that haughty lord
 Of evils in the future stored;
 Little he cared to check the boy
 In whom was centred all his joy,
 Or, by one harsh reproof, to raise
 A shadow o'er his early days.

What though his youthful breast should prove
 The seat of an enthusiast's love ;
 And blindly, wildly, madly burn
 With passion's fire? Soon would he learn,
 That ample wealth and lordly birth
 Wed not alone with simple worth :—
 That hearts are baubles, empty toys,
 Just fit, with all their griefs and joys,
 To deck the altar of the god,
 Who rules mankind with iron rod.

Nor Théroigne's parents saw from far,
 Gathering about their idol-star,
 The darkness that would quench its light
 In gloom more deep than tenfold night :
 Nay; saw they with a secret pride
 The youthful pair, as, side by side,
 They issued from the green wood's shade,
 Or through the fields together strayed.
 And who shall say that ne'er there stole
 Into that father's anxious soul,
 The half-formed wish, the fond desire,
 The trembling hope, that would aspire
 To see his daughter rise, and stand
 Among the proud ones of the land?
 And who shall say that mother's heart
 Ne'er felt the agonising smart
 Of undefined foreboding dread,
 Lest, by some *ignis fatuus* led,
 Her pure unsullied child might live
 In darkness o'er vain hopes to grieve;

Or, sunk, degraded, and betrayed,
 A poor polluted outcast made,
 Might curse the day that gave her breath,
 And rush to an unbidden death?

But vain those hopes, as vain those fears;
 Swiftly depart the rolling years;
 And childhood with its guileless truth,
 And ardent, but incautious, youth
 With both are past, nor either glows
 With warmer fires than friendship knows.
 Nay more; in devious paths they moved
 And all the power of absence proved,
 To extinguish every kindling thought,
 With danger, or with rapture fraught.
 He in the college, camp, or court,
 Study severe, or manly sport,
 Far from his early haunts and friends,
 The opening years of manhood spends.
 She from the tranquil scenes of home
 With little wish or power to roam,
 Pursues, through each unvaried day,
 Her quiet unobtrusive way;
 Shielded by a fond father's arms
 From outward dangers and alarms,
 And, by a mother's gentler care,
 Guarded against each secret snare.
 More late indeed, she dwelt awhile
 Within the convent's cloistered pile:
 Yet there the sacred sisterhood
 Around her, as a bulwark, stood.

And still, as year succeeds to year,
 Fresh beauties in her form appear;
 While gathered truths, and arts refined,
 Kindle her soul, adorn her mind.

So have I seen the Egyptian flower,
 Though suns might scorch, or tempests lower,
 Safe housed within its crystal home,
 Where storm nor heat unbidden come,
 Rising each day in stately height,
 More freshly green, more purely white,
 As spotless in its virgin glow
 As the first fall of wintry snow!

Childhood, with its unvarnished truth,
 And ardent, but incautious, youth,
 With both are passed away;
 And now, behold, again they meet,
 Again with kindly accents greet,
 On this ill-fated day.

I see around that beauteous flower
 The serpent coiled; this morning hour
 Is black as deepest night;
 For, lo, the gathering clouds arise,
 Whose darkness shall o'erspread the skies,
 And quench that peerless light.

Think not, one transient interview
 Sufficed the friendship to renew
 Felt at an earlier date;

Think not a heart like hers would prove
 An unresisting prey to love,
 The willing slave of fate.

True, there are streams, whose shallow flow
 The smallest stone you chance to throw
 Will ruffle into foam;

While mighty rivers sweep along,
 Regardless of the hurrying throng
 That o'er their waters roam.

True, there are souls with whom one hour
 May serve to vindicate the power of

Of the all-conquering Boy;
 Whom but a word, a passing glance,
 May thrill with anguish, or entrance
 With heart-transporting joy.

And he, as now again he views
 His childhood's friend, at once renews

His childhood's friendship too:
 Nay, feels within his throbbing heart
 The welcome pang, the pleasing smart,
 That childhood never knew.

But Théroigne! O full many a time
 Saw she, in all his manly prime,
 The champion of her youth;

And many a time his accents heard,
 Sweet as the warblings of a bird,
 And rich in all but truth:

And yet, at most, 'twas friendship's voice
Bade her in sympathy rejoice

At aught that made him glad ;
Or heave the unconscious deep-drawn sigh,
Or raise the enquiring, tearful eye,
When seemed his spirit sad.

But woman is but woman still ;
Though proud her thought, and firm her will,
Her heart is still the same :
And patient, persevering love
Must, soon or late, effectual prove
To raise a kindred flame.

And O, when once the unyielding soul
Has yielded to love's soft control,
And caught its kindling light ;
It burns with an unearthly glow,
Such as base spirits never know
So pure, so warm, so bright !

And didst thou, Théroigne, didst thou love ?
Yes ; and thy deep devotion prove,
(As woman only can,)
By immolation of thy all,
Obedient to the imperious call
Of heartless, faithless man.

* * * * *

There was gloom in the sun, as he sunk to his rest,
'Mid the dark clouds that curtained his bed in the
west ;

There is gloom in those clouds, as they sullenly roll,
 Like a bannered host, from the verge to the pole :
 There is gloom in the rain, as it falls, drop by drop,
 On the well-watered vale, or the thirsty hill-top :
 There is gloom in the wind, that goes moaning along,
 Like the echoes, scarce heard, of some funeral song :
 There is gloom in the trees, as they noiselessly wave
 Their spectre-like branches o'er cross and o'er grave,
 And bow to the gale with umbrageous head,
 Like the plumes on a hearse, nodding over the dead :
 There is gloom in each flash of electrical light
 That luridly glares through the darkness of night,
 Like glances shot forth from the swift-rolling eyes
 Of the storm-ruling fiend as he rides through the
 skies :

There is gloom in the thunder, whose echoes re-
 hearse

The deep-muttered tones of his terrible curse :
 All, all aids to darken the general view,
 And lends a fresh gloom to the night's sombre hue.—

But hark! the thunders nearer sound ;
 The heavens are all on fire around ;
 The wind no longer softly sighs,
 But rushes madly through the skies
 With horrid shriek or blustering roar ;
 While from the clouds thick torrents pour !
 "There's war in heaven !" Seems it as though
 The Archangel and his dragon Foe,
 With sacred, or with impious boast,
 Were marshalling each his mighty host !

Amid the raging of the storm
 I see from far a beauteous form,
 A maiden by her lover's side,
 His loved one, not, alas, his bride.
 No greeting friends around them stand
 With kindly voice, and eye, and hand:—
 No church's consecrated shade
 Has echoed to the vows they made;
 No priest of the Eternal God
 Has spread his hands to Heaven abroad,
 And breathed his all-prevailing prayer
 For blessings on the wedded pair:—
 No father proudly smiled to see
 His daughter's happy destiny;
 No mother's heart has found relief
 In mingled tears of joy and grief.—
 Beneath the canopy of heaven,
 Beneath those clouds by tempest riven;
 Amid the wailings of the blast,
 And heaven's own tear-drops falling fast;—
 In such a scene, on such a night,
 Their mutual fatal vows they plight;
 Then fly from home, from peace, from rest,
 By man unseen, by God unblest!
 How could a maid so pure as she,
 By art, by nature formed to be
 The joy and pride of him, whose'er
 Her beauty and her worth might share:—
 How could she stoop so vilely low,
 As thus a fugitive to go,

Regardless of each nobler claim,
 Regardless of her own fair name;
 Braving the world's unpitying scorn,
 And, (but for one,) alone, forlorn;
 By him, perchance, at heart despised,
 By him, whose only love she prized?

And he,—O if he truly felt,
 As suppliant at her feet he knelt,
 That boasted flame of pure desire,
 That all but an angelic fire;
 Why did he not her promise claim
 To share his rank, his wealth, his name;
 And with him on the road of life
 To journey, as his honored wife?
 Ask why his sire's unbending pride
 Forbade him an untitled bride;
 And bid him from his bosom tear
 The idol he had cherished there.—
 O there was guilt in each, in all;
 Yet would that guilt's damnation fall
 Chiefly upon the haughty lord,
 Whose proud, irrevocable word
 Rose like a barrier, to divide
 The fond one from his chosen bride,
 Till, leaping o'er with daring bound,
 His blessing, and his curse he found.

For her;—suffice it that she loved,
 And thus her deep devotion proved,
 (As woman only can,)

By immolation of her all,
 Obedient to the imperious call
 Of heartless, faithless man.

END OF PART II.

Part Third of *Théroigne de Méricourt* will be
 published on July 1, 1855.

THEROIGNE DE MERICOURT;

A Romance,

IN FIVE PARTS,

BY

LOUIS S. D. REES.

PART III.

Philadelphia:
WILLIS P. HAZARD,
178 CHESNUT STREET.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by

LOUIS S. D. REES,

In the Office of the Clerk of the District Court of the United States, in and for the
Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

King & Baird, Printers, Sansom Street.

TO THE HONORABLE CHARLES SUMNER, U. S. S.

HONORABLE SIR,

Allow me, in testimony of the admiration I feel for your noble and persevering advocacy of the cause of freedom, to dedicate to you this Third Part of a "Romance" founded on the history of Theroigne de Mericourt.

You will, doubtless, find in the opening lines many passages with which you do not sympathize, and some, it may be, of which you cannot approve ; yet you will, I trust, excuse such passages, for the sake of others, in which I have endeavored to give utterance to the feelings entertained by yourself, and by millions of your fellow-citizens, on a subject of the deepest interest.

I am, Hon'ble Sir,

Your very obedient servant,

LOUIS S. D. REES.

THEROIGNE DE MERICOURT.

PART III.

LAND of my birth ! thy glorious name
Has kindled many a poet's flame,
And struck from many a minstrel's lyre
Flashes of patriotic fire.
How shall I dare my glimmering lamp to show,
Where, lit by thee, such burning lustres glow ?

Wide o'er the world from pole to pole,
As on the circling ages roll,
Thy streaming glory shines afar,
Earth's brightest, purest, holiest star :
Star ? Nay, its sun ; whose genial ray
Has turned its darkness into day,
And shed all o'er its realms abroad
The light of truth, of heaven, of God.

Child of the storm ! thy home and rest
Is on the ocean's heaving breast :
The billows of the mighty deep,
That round thy shores so proudly sweep ;

The winds that raise their voices high,
 Or, hushed to whispers, softly sigh ;—
 What are those winds, those surging waves ?
 What, but thy waiting, crouching slaves ?
 Long did they both the strife maintain
 Against thy being and thy reign ;
 And blustering roar, or madly foam,
 Against thy infant island-home ;
 Yet, lo ! this day thy white cliffs stand,
 Bulwarks about the smiling land,
 Firm as when first the Julian host
 In martial pomp assailed thy coast ;
 While thy strong hand, with tightened rein,
 Checks the wild fury of the main,
 And every breeze exults to bear
 Thy banner floating on the air.

Nor warring elements alone
 Have sought to hurl thee from thy throne ;
 But mightier man, with envious hate,
 Restless at the decrees of fate,
 With futile force, and impious trust,
 Has striven to lay thee in the dust.

First came the Roman armies forth ;
 Then the wild sea-kings of the North

Assailed thee with their pirate-band,
 And spread wild havoc through thy land.
 Yes ; and in this our later age
 We've seen the world in arms engage,
 And all its countless hosts combined
 Obedient to one master mind,
 Ready to give the fatal blow,
 And lay thy pride and beauty low.
 And did'st thou fall ?—No, no ; the world
 Still sees thy conquering flag unfurled ;
 And, the death-struggle safely past,
 Hears thy triumphant trumpet's blast.

Rise from the dead, ye wondrous men,
 My country's boast ! O rise again ;
 Revisit this terrestrial sphere,
 Once radiant with your bright career !

I see them, as they move along,
 A mystic, reverend, spectral throng :—
 Warriors, in garments dyed with blood,
 Who in the front of battle stood,
 Still shouting with their latest breath,
 “ On, on ! to victory or death ! ”—
 Kings who right well their calling knew,
 Its honors, and its burdens too ;

Shepherds and fathers of the State,
 More loved as good, than feared as great :—
 Statesmen, whose hand the helm could guide
 Through treacherous shoal, or swelling tide ;
 And keep the vessel on her course,
 'Midst inward strife, 'gainst foreign force :—
 The sons of science, they who spanned
 Even heaven itself, with giant hand ;
 Or wrung from the reluctant earth
 The hidden story of her birth ;
 Or 'stablished man's extended reign
 O'er the firm land, the boundless main :—
 Poets, whose genius mounted high,
 Far, far beyond the distant sky,
 Nor stopped till on the eternal Light
 It gazed with an undazzled sight ;
 Caught from the lips of Seraphim
 The music of their rapturous hymn,
 And waked, from strings of earthly tone,
 Sounds heard till then in heaven alone ;
 Or, turning thence, with rapid sweep
 Plunged in the dark Tartarean deep,
 And sung, in wild unearthly strains,
 Its endless groans, its endless pains :
 Or with a searching eye could scan
 That mystery, the heart of man ;
 Reveal its joy, grief, hope and fear,
 Its pride abase, its sorrows cheer.—

But who are these, whose robes of white
 Shine brighter than the morning light ?
 About whose brows, in glittering rays,
 The forked lightning harmless plays ?
 Whose harps of gold, with trembling string
 Echo their voices as they sing ;
 While grateful Rapture from their eyes
 Darts upward to her native skies ?
 These are thy Church's joy and boast,
 Her faithful, blood-stained, martyr host :
 Who, rather than the truth forsake,
 Smiled on the rack, embraced the stake ;
 And, in the dungeon's darkness, found
 Heaven's own pure light diffused around.

And are these spirits of the mighty dead
 Thy only glories, England ? Have they fled,
 Nor left one single lingering star behind,
 To point thee out, thou Bethlehem of mankind ?
 Perish the thought !—See how around thee rise
 New constellations to adorn thy skies !
 Thy bar, thy senate, and thy pulpit still
 With burning eloquence the soul can thrill ;
 And sages, warriors, statesmen still are found,
 The guard and honor of thy hallowed ground.

What if less dazzling be the stars that glow
 Now in thy firmament ? The light they throw

Warms while it cheers, and lends a kindly ray
 To scenes scarce thought of at an earlier day.
 Where is the squalid hut, the prison-cell,
 The den of vice, (that miniature of hell,)
 That does not see, this hour, a holy beam
 From Heaven itself athwart its darkness stream ;
 While men like Shaftesbury so nobly stoop,
 (Nay, rise !) to lift the fallen masses up ?

When was there ever seen upon thy throne
 One, in whom all the virtues brighter shone,
 Than shine they now in her, whose sovereign sway
 Hundreds of millions joyfully obey ?
 The world, 'tis true, full many a noble queen
 Long ere our own Victoria, has seen ;
 But has it seen the daughter, mother, wife,
 Blameless alike in every stage of life,
 Softening her royalty's too dazzling blaze
 By each domestic charm, each female grace ?

But 'tis not for thy fame in arts or arms,
 Thy young men's valor, or thy maidens' charms ;
 It is not for those noble ones, who stand
 At once the pride and bulwark of thy land ;
 It is not for that loved and honored queen,
 In whom such varied excellence is seen ;—
 It is not for thy happy rural homes,
 Thy reverend castles, or thy sainted domes ;—

'Tis not for these, O Britain, that I prove
 Most of a patriot's pride, a patriot's love :—
 It is because I recognize in thee,
 The only hope for human liberty ;
 Because, throughout thy wide-extended reign,
 No crouching slave wears the oppressor's chain ;
 That every son of thine, in every place,
 Whate'er his rank, his color, or his race,
 Though poor, though outcast, though degraded,
 still

May say with kings, " I will not ! " and, " I will ! "
 Thou hast thy faults, I know it, and I own,
 And they who love thee most those faults bemoan ;
 Yet on thy 'scutcheon, God be praised ! is not
 This one, this damning, and this damned spot.

Attend ; I'll paint a scene, no fancy sketch :—
 See foremost on my canvas yon poor wretch,
 Well housed, well fed, well clothed, allowed per-
 chance,

When toils are o'er, his banjo and his dance !
 No anxious boding cares his soul engage
 For unprovided sickness, or old age ;
 Nor doubts he at the last to find a decent grave ;—
 " Who is the happy man ? " you ask.—The man's
 a SLAVE !

Now, do you burn to share his favored lot ?
 His blessings, and his bondage ? I trow not.

Yet he's contented ; knows no better state ;
 And acquiesces in his servile fate.
 Conscience and reason in his soul are mute :
 He eats, drinks, sleeps ; and lives, and dies—a
 brute !

Not so : upon some general holiday,
 Lured by the gathering crowds, behold him stray
 To where, with many a shout of noisy mirth,
 The nation celebrates its freedom's birth.
 Awhile the noise is hushed ; amid the crowd
 There rises one, who reads in accents loud
 That " Declaration," which is held to be
 The charter of the people's liberty.
 Little his understanding comprehends
 Of what he hears ; yet, to his heart descends,
 Aye, to his heart of hearts, this beam of light,
That each has his unalienable right ;
And he, who for that right his weapon draws,
May claim God's blessing on a righteous cause.
 This truth awakes him from his long repose ;
 A fire new-kindled in his bosom glows ;
 And deep-drawn sighs and bitter tears, proclaim
 His soul is melting in the genial flame.

But vain his tears, vainly he looks around ;
 For him no spot on earth is Freedom's ground.

Think ye the thousands, whom, on festive days,
 He heard unite in Liberty's sweet praise,
 Sincerely breathed her consecrated name?
 Test them;—let this poor wretch the blessing
 claim ;

And will they in the generous wish rejoice?
 Give him their aid? or cheer him with their voice?
 No, there's not one, but, should he burst his chain,
 Would lend a hand to fetter him again :
 Not one, but what would join the hue and cry,
 To catch the slave, or hunt him till he die !

Yet stay ; has he not heard, in days gone by,
 That far away, up yonder river, lie
 Lands where the curse of slavery is unknown,
 And man may call at least himself his own ?
 He has : and though a thousand barriers rise,
 To thwart his purpose, yet he flies—he flies !
 O glorious flight ! whose daring and whose skill
 Surpass, yea, far surpass (deride who will,)
 The deeds of many a hero, many a king,
 Whom patriots boast of, and whom poets sing.
 If he succeed, he hopes for no renown ;
 And should he fail, and should they hunt him down,
 The lash, the dungeon, and the burning brand,
 Like vengeful furies, to receive him stand.
 Not one has he to give him friendly aid ;
 Not one the partner of his secret made ;

Alone, unfriended, to the north he turns,
Cheered, quickened by the fire that in him burns.

The "friends of freedom," (honorable crew !)
With noble ardor hasten to pursue ;
His fellow-slaves turn out with thoughtless glee,
Eager to catch him, or the sport to see ;
While bloodhounds fierce, with deep malignant
bay,
Scent out the footsteps of the human prey.

Good God ! and wilt Thou sit upon thy throne,
And hear, unheeded, his despairing groan ?
No : He, who saw his ancient people weep,
Struck off their bonds, and, through the opening
deep,

Led them triumphantly from shore to shore,
On paths ne'er trod by foot of man before,
Through many a scorching day, and dreary night,
Sustains, and guides, and guards him in his flight,
Till, at the last, he rests from all his woes
There, where the "Pilgrim Fathers" found repose.

And is he safe ?—Oh yes ! the generous race,
Who from those iron men their lineage trace,
Around him like a wall of fire will be,
Proud to defend his new-found liberty.

No, no : upon New England's burning brow
"Ichabod," "Ichabod," is branded now ;

Into her city-streets, her judgment halls,
 That loathsome reptile, the slave catcher, crawls;
 There, there, before the astonished face of day,
 Coils, like a serpent, round his helpless prey;
 While threatening laws, and martial power displayed,
 Force her to silence, or compel her aid.

Gods ! are there none, whose souls indignant rise
 At such an insult ? none, whose pitying eyes
 Shed tears of sorrow o'er the wretch's fate,
 Dragged back again to his degraded state ?

Thank God, there are : a remnant yet remains
 In whom right principle, right feeling reigns ;—
 A few, like her, whose tale of negro woe
 Has caused full many a pitying tear to flow ;
 A few, who think there is a God above,
 A God of justice, and a God of love ;
 And tremble lest before his bar they come,
 Stained with the oppressor's guilt, to share his
 doom.

Men such as these, with generous passions warm,
 Forewarn the freed one of the rising storm ;
 Give him the well-filled purse, and bid him flee
 No matter where, so he may yet be free :
 Anywhere, so the stars and stripes outspread,
 Wave not in solemn mockery o'er his head ;

Anywhere in this terrene universe,
That does not vibrate with the slave's deep curse.

And where should that be, O my country, where,
Save in the lands which still thine empire share?

See how they smile, benignantly serene;
The only free soil in this western scene;
The only spot where every man may have
A freeman's homestead, and a freeman's grave!

And now, behold him on that happy shore!
His slavery, his flight, his fears are o'er:
New joys, new hopes, new principles arise,
Glow at his heart, and sparkle in his eyes.
Reason awakes; and Conscience o'er his soul,
With Reason waked, asserts her high control.
The slave within him dies; right self-respect
Raises his drooping head, he walks erect;
Feels he's a man, and trusts at length to stand
Among God's freemen, at God's own right hand.
On festive days he joins the festal throng,
Swells the loud shout, and sings the loyal song:

Rescued from Slavery,

Safe in his liberty,

Proudly, I ween,

Boasts he a freeman's joys,

And makes a merry noise,

Singing, with heart and voice,

"God save the Queen!"

These are thy jewels, England; the bright gem
 That sparkles in thy monarch's diadem,
 That "Mount of Light" the matchless Koh-i-nor,
 Though won by victory in justest war,
 Becomes as worthless as the yellow sand,
 While trophies such as these adorn thy land.

And is it here alone such trophies rise?
 Beneath this western sun, those northern skies?
 No; in the *nucleus* of thy wide domain,
 Thy island-home, I seek them not in vain.
 From struggling Europe, struggling to be free,
 Full many an exile finds repose in thee.
 The fallen monarch, and the hunted slave,
 Alike thy succor and protection crave:
 To each, to all thy bounteous hands are spread;
 For each, for all thy tears of pity shed.

O what a freight of human woes,
 Wafted by every gale that blows,
 Is landed on thy shores!
 What tears, from eyes, that vainly weep,
 Fall voiceless on the mighty deep,
 That hoarsely round thee roars!

Nor is it to thy shores alone
 With eyes that weep, and hearts that groan,
 The sons of sorrow haste:

Ah no! through the wide world they roam,
 From many a desolated home,
 Far o'er the ocean's curling foam,
 Far o'er the desert waste.

And yet in vain they strive to change,
 As restless o'er the earth they range,
 Their nature with the scene :
 The barbed dart of grief or crime
 Alike in every place and time
 Remains deep fixed within.*

* * * * *

Who is this so sadly bending
 O'er the waves that round her break ?
 Down her pallid cheek descending,
 Floods of tears her anguish speak.

Is it that the voice of strangers
 Harshly grates upon her ear ?
 Or that untried scenes and dangers
 Fill her soul with anxious fear ?

Griefs like these are summer showers,
 Transient is the gloom they cast ;
 Her's the tempest that still lowers,
 Even when its fury's past.

* Cælum, non animum, mutant, qui trans mare currunt."—HORACE.

Does she mourn for friends departed ;—
 From the green earth torn away ?
 Friends once joyous and light-hearted,
 Now to gloomy death a prey ?

No ; the loved one who thus leaves us,
 Is but parted for a while ;
 And the tyrant who bereaves us,
 Death himself, can wear a smile.

She we gaze on now, shall never,
 Never know a brighter day :
 Joy, nor peace, nor hope shall ever
 Cheer her with one kindling ray ;

Not so ;—like a fleeting vapor
 Life is vanishing away ;
 Like a flickering, dying taper,
 Like the meteor's flashing ray.

Like the frothy, air-blown bubbles,
 Floating on a boundless sea ;—
 All its joy, and all its troubles,
 Transient as itself must be.

Can this be Theroigne ? Yes, 'tis she.
 We saw her in her infancy,
 Sealed with the sacramental sign,
 And sharing in the rite divine ;

We heard the joyous strains they sung ;
 We heard the merry peals that rung ;
 We witnessed, in the lordly hall,
 The bounteous feast, the rustic ball ;
 And marked how every heart was gay
 Upon that festive, holy day :
 We saw her in her virgin prime,
 Just when the wizard hand of Time
 Had touched her with transforming power,
 And changed the bud into a flower ;
 Then, when before our eyes she stood
 In all the charms of womanhood.

Behold her now ! how sadly strange !
 So short the time ; so vast the change !
 Where is that dignity of mien ?
 That bearing worthy of a queen ?
 Where is the sunny light that played
 O'er every feature ? while a shade
 Of pensive thought, but served to throw
 A softness o'er the radiant glow ?
 Gone, gone for ever : on that brow
 Sorrow and shame are written now ;
 Lilies have bloomed, (and faded too,)
 Where late we saw the rose's hue ;
 And shrinking, bending is her form,
 Like the tall grain beneath the storm.

What of it ? 'Tis the tale oft told,
 Of beauty, honor, virtue sold,—
 Sold ? and for what ?—the word, the oath
 Of one prepared to trample both
 Beneath his feet ; perchance, to make,
 E'en of the hearts he'd power to break,
 His empty boast ; secure, the while,
 That fools and knaves will hear, and smile.

And yet there are, who strive to burst
 (Curst be the men ! their words accurst !)
 That firm, indissoluble band,
 By Heaven's benignant wisdom planned,
 That binds in one the wedded pair,
 Life's pleasures and its pains to share :
 Men, that would trust to vain caprice
 All future hope, all present peace ;
 And make the boasted joys of home
 As transient as the crested foam.

Think ye her faithless lover planned,
 When pledged she him her heart, her hand,
 That foul apostasy, which now
 Has graven anguish on her brow ?
 Think ye he meant or feared to prove
 So recreant to his vows of love,
 That her, who trusted and adored,
 Made him her soul's unrivalled lord,

For him forsook her happy home,
 Content, with him, the world to roam,
 His brutal arm should one day fling,
 An outcast and degraded thing,
 Forth to this dreary waste of life
 'Mid all its danger, toil, and strife,
 Uncheered, unpitied, unforgiven,
 By men on earth, or God in heaven?

No: had some prophet, on that day
 When proud he bore his prize away,
 With warning hand, and warning voice
 Intruded on his new-born joys;
 And, holding up before his view
 In all his hideous form and hue
 The vile seducer, bid him scan
 Himself, and cried, "Thou art the man!"
 With all the warmth he had exclaimed
 Of conscious innocence defamed,
 (Like the usurping king of old,
 Aghast at his own deeds foretold,)
 "Am I but a vile carcase, then,
 Loathsome alike to gods and men?"

Fondly and deeply had he loved;
 And, by a genuine passion moved,
 Had boldly launched upon that sea,
 So brightly glad, so wildly free,

Whose sportive waters, as they dance
 In merry mood, or warmly glance
 Responsive to the amorous beam
 Of wanton day, too smiling seem
 To threaten death, or rude alarms
 To such as trust their treacherous charms.

See, see how they sail With a prosperous gale,
 Though unhallowed their voyage must be !
 Not a cloud doth arise To o'ershadow their skies,
 Or to darken that beautiful sea.

The Graces are there In the rapture to share,
 And Venus looks smilingly down ;
 The young god of love Spreads his pinions above,
 To screen them from Purity's frown.

A thousand bright isles, Decked with Nature's
 own smiles,
 Start in view as they bound on their way ;
 Whose white cliffs are seen Robed in mantles of
 green,
 Or with wild-flowered tapestry gay.

The things of the deep, To salute them outleap,
 And gambol unconscious of fear ;
 While the rapturous song Of the feathery throng,
 Is heard from those bright islands near.

A perfume is borne, Like the breath of the morn,
 Or the fragrance of newly-mown hay,
 By the zephyrs that waft Their adventurous
 craft,
 And around them like infancy play.

Why, why is the scene So divinely serene?
 Can the Heavens such a union approve?
 No; the Bright Ones look down With a gathering
 frown,
 And the gods are all absent but Love.

'Tis the dictate of Love Has impelled them to
 rove,
 Where so many before have been wrecked:
 'Tis his magical power That has gilded the hour,
 And with beauty all nature has decked.

But vain are his arts. The delusion departs
 At the touch of Time's mystical wand;
 And portents of wrath Spread a gloom o'er their
 path,
 And darken the prospect beyond.

What seemed a glad sun When their course was
 begun,
 Now scorchingly blazes on high;
 And the prospering gales That were swelling
 their sails,
 Sweep wildly and fitfully by.

The spots of green land Which before, on each
hand,

Smiled applause on their joyous career,
Are gone ; and, instead, Rugged rocks lift their
head,

And like menacing monsters appear.

No carolling bird In its blitheness is heard,
No fish gambol sportively round ;
But demons ride past On the wings of the blast,
And with shrieks make the welkin resound.

'Twas even so : awhile they dwelt
In bliss by lovers only felt :
The past, with all its fond regrets,
Rich in the present, each forgets ;
The future rises to their view,
Bright with hope's own celestial hue :
Their very guilt but serves to throw
O'er their stolen joys a deeper glow.

Then came, to damp their ardent joys,
Time's chilling hand, and truth's stern voice ;

" Had he with proper caution weighed

" The price he for his passion paid ?

" Could he for ever brave the ire

" Of his inexorable sire ?

" Were there not courtly dames as fair,

" Worthy his name and rank to share ?

"Yes, and among them one, whose eye
 "More brightly beams when he is by;
 "Whose flattering voice and tell-tale cheek
 "A heart not hard to win bespeak;
 "Though grace in her, and real worth,
 "With wealth are joined, and noble birth;
 "Nor had the proudest in the land
 "Disdained the honor of her hand:—
 "And must he turn from such a bride,
 "To keep a mistress by his side?
 "Must he through life an exile rove,
 "To prove his constancy of love?
 "No; this idolatry of truth
 "Might suit an ardent, dreaming youth;
 "But blissful dreams must pass away
 "Before the sober light of day;
 "And youth's bright visions must depart,
 "When manhood sways the mind and heart."

Thoughts such as these at first on tiptoe stole
 Into the secret chambers of his soul,
 As fearing to be heard; then whispered soft
 Their prudent counsels; and, though silenced oft,
 As oft returned, and still in tones more bold
 Renewed their pleadings, as his heart grew cold.
 And so, at length,—But wherefore toils my verse
 In dull detail the story to rehearse?
 Thousands, like her, have trusted and adored;
 Thousands, like her, too late alas, deplored

Their vain prostration at an empty shrine,
 Where faith and hope had placed a form divine.
 Victims like her in countless numbers fall
 Each day, obedient to ambition's call;
 And Mammon's altar bears on every part
 Dark stains of blood, wrung from some broken
 heart.

Where shall the helpless outcast turn?
 How shall she quench the thoughts that burn
 Within her tortured brain?
 What hand shall timely aid impart?
 What kindly voice shall cheer her heart,
 And bid her hope again?

On fluttering wing her trembling prayer
 Strives to ascend, and beats the air
 With unavailing pain:
 Black, angry tempest-clouds arise;
 Fierce, howling blasts sweep through the skies,
 And drive it back again.

In vain her weary spirit strays
 O'er the wide earth; in vain surveys
 Each friend of former years:—
 E'en should their hearts with pity melt,
 The kindly sympathy they felt,
 Could give but useless tears.

Yet see ! from far a glimmering light
Shines 'mid the shadows of the night

With faint, but cheering beam :

O how her soul exults to see

Its kindly, heaven-lit radiancy,

Athwart the darkness stream !

From thee, thou tranquil, happy vale,

Where oft hath strayed my pensive tale,

From thee that light arose :

Amid the scenes of earlier years,

Of childhood's hopes and childhood's fears,

There, there its lustre glows.

Should not the friendly taper stand,

Placed by a fond paternal hand

Within the latticed frame ;

A lighthouse, shining for the soul

O'er the black waves that round her roll,

With guiding, cheering flame ?

Should not a father's bowels yearn

To hail the prodigal's return,

To speak the pardoning word ?

Should not the life-restoring voice,

That bids the broken heart rejoice,

First from his lips be heard ?

Yes ; let the judge in tones severe,

Like death-knells falling on the ear,

Pronounce the sinner's doom ;

But Oh, let tears of pity flow
 E'en for a guilty sufferer's woe,
 Within his childhood's home !

And was it so ? Did Theroigne see,
 Down in that depth of misery,
 A father's hand stretched forth to save
 His lost one from a yawning grave ?
 No, no : erect in sullen pride,
 E'en had she in his presence died,
 Hardly would ye have seen him bow
 To wipe the death-sweat from her brow.
 It was a mother's hand, that traced
 The burning lines, which bade her haste,
 All lost and ruined, yet to prove
 How changeless is a woman's love.

And now, behold her drawing near,
 Cheered on by hope, held back by fear !
 The old familiar scenes arise
 To sadden, not rejoice her eyes :—
 The reverend castle's moss-grown walls ;
 Her proud seducer's princely halls ;
 The " happy valley " bathed in light,
 So calmly still, so warmly bright,
 That sin, and sorrow, and despair
 Would seem to find no dwelling there :

The tranquil home, that saw her sip
 Life's bitter cup, with trembling lip ;
 That saw her when, in youth, she quaffed,
 With eager haste, the sweetened draught ;
 That saw her when she seized the bowl
 Drugged for the ruin of the soul ;
 And to the dregs the poison drained,
 By God, nor man, nor fate restrained.

That home so happy once, at length,
 With faltering step and failing strength
 She reaches ;—but no beaming eye
 More brightly beams as she draws nigh :
 No parent greets his sorrowing child
 With soothing word, or accent mild :
 No unbarred door, or open gate
 Stands, her arrival to await :
 With shutters closed, or blinds let down,
 The very windows seem to frown ;
 As if the senseless wood and stone
 Disdained the fallen one to own.

She enters :—in the silent hall,
 With echoing beat her footsteps fall :
 Nought else she hears save the dull click
 Of the old dial's measured tick.
 She listens for the faintest sound
 Of living thing :—all, all around

Is still as death ; upon her home
 Some desolating blight has come.
 There, where she trusted that one voice,
 At least would bid her heart rejoice,
 And more than one her pardon speak,
 Or seal its impress on her cheek ;—
 Within her father's house alone
 She stands :—but hark ! that deep-drawn groan
 Issues from yonder chamber ; there
 Tutored, perchance, by stern despair,
 Some hapless sufferer learns to glow
 With pity for another's woe.

With softest touch and noiseless tread
 (Half hopeful, half o'erwhelmed with dread,)
 She seeks that chamber ; turns the key ;
 Enters ; and starts, appalled, to see
 Death's funeral Majesty displayed,
 In all his dreary pomp arrayed.
 No cheerful beam of garish day,
 Amid the solemn scene may stray ;
 But the dim taper's sacred light
 Shines, through the artificial night,
 Upon a coffin, (dreary throne,
 Where the grim monarch sits alone,)
 On which a velvet pall outspread,
 (The decent covering of the dead,)
 Sustains a cross, benignant sign,
 Pledge to mankind of love divine.

Within that court of Death she sees,
 Low crouching on his bended knees,—
 As if to plead, alas, too late
 Against the stern decree of fate—
 Her father, left thus lonely here,
 With none, not one, his griefs to cheer.

She kneels beside him; breathes his name
 With faltering voice; nor dares to claim,
 E'en in the presence of the dead,
 A father's blessing on her head.
 She asks but to receive the cup
 Of sorrow, e'er he drink it up;
 And taste its bitterness, and share
 The grief that lays him prostrate there.
 She asks but to sustain, in part,
 The load that presses on his heart;
 To swell the torrent of his tears;
 And echo to his sighs with hers.

Alas! she knew not that the stroke
 Which shivers the obdurate oak,
 Leveled at iron will but make
 The mass more dense, more hard to break:
 She knew not that, if hearts there be
 Made kindlier by their misery,
 Others there are which sterner grow
 Beneath each heaven-inflicted blow:

She knew not that the self-same hour,
Which rudely plucked that fragile flower
And flung it to the earth, had traced
Its course of desolated waste
Upon his blighted heart and mind,
Nor left one verdant spot behind.

“Murd’ress!” he cried, “and art thou here;
“Unchecked by grief, unawed by fear?
“Canst thou, with living eyes, survey
“The poor, heart-broken, breathless clay
“Of her, thy mother, by thy crime
“Cut off, e’en in her life’s sweet prime?
“O had she sunk into the earth,
“Or ere she gave the wanton birth;
“Nor left a recreant to disgrace
“By foulest deeds her stainless race!”

With frantic haste he tears away
The coverings of the lifeless clay;
The cross, the pall, the coffin-lid;
All, all by which the dead was hid:
And views again that pallid face,
Where Death has left his darkening trace.
What tranquil sleep! what calm repose!
What rest from earth, and all earth’s woes!
There is no careworn furrow now
Upon that pale yet placid brow:

That bosom heaves no hopeless sighs,
 Nor floods of sorrow drown those eyes :
 'Tis as if heaven itself were here,
 And God had wiped away each tear.

“My spouse! my love! my own!” he cries,
 “Once more I view thee with these eyes;
 “Once more I kiss thy gentle cheek;
 “Once more these words of passion speak;
 “Once more I hold thee to my heart,
 “E're the dark grave between us part!”

And Theroigne!—O what tongue can tell,
 As on her ear his accents fell,
 What thrilling agonies of pain
 Shot through her heart, and racked her brain?

She “heard him, but she heeded not;”

Her heart was turned to stone:
 The past, the present were forgot;
 All but the dead alone.

She saw before her stiff, and cold,
 And hastening to decay,
 The arms that cradled her of old,
 The bosom where she lay.

She saw those eyes; whose every beam
 Was kindled from above;
 Those lips you might an angel's deem,
 So full of truth and love;

Voiceless as some deserted tomb,
 Where e'en the worms had died;
 Dark as the deepest midnight gloom,
 When stars their radiance hide.

And did she weep, and tear her hair,
 And smite upon her breast?
 Or strive, by shriekings of despair,
 To break the sleeper's rest?

No; like a figure carved from stone,
 So motionless and cold,
 She stood; nor tear, nor sigh, nor groan
 Her depth of anguish told.

'Twas a paralysis of grief,
 A syncope of woe;
 Where tears alone could give relief,
 And tears refused to flow.

Had he but known, that wretched man,
 To read her inmost soul;
 And trace the burning lines, which ran
 Along that mystic scroll:—

Could he have seen the dark despair,
 The horrible remorse,
 Graven on her heart while gazing there
 Upon that silent corse:

Stern though he were, his soul had bowed
 To pity's softening power ;
 The claims of filial grief allowed,
 And pardoned in that hour.

But love, nor pity knew he now,
 Each gentler thought had fled,
 Since shame was written on his brow,
 And his soul's joy was dead.

Ye, who behold your social hearth
 Still gladdened by the stainless mirth
 Of children dear as life ;
 While every grief is gently soothed,
 And each rough path benignly smoothed
 By a devoted wife ;

Blame not the man whose widowed heart
 Had seen his every joy depart,
 His every hope cut down :
 Had read before Death's angel came
 His own disgrace, his daughter's shame,
 In many a lowering frown.

Nay, rather, tears of pity shed
 For the poor wretch, upon whose head
 The storm so wildly broke ;
 Who, crouching 'neath a former woe,
 Received from fate a heavier blow ;
 And sunk beneath the stroke.

- "Behold!" he cries, "behold, and weep!
 "Thy crime hath sealed those eyes in sleep;
 "Hath stopped that vital breath;
 "Thy hand it was which struck the blow
 "That laid thy peerless mother low,
 "E'en in the dust of death.
 "Soon as she heard her recreant child,
 "By passion, or by pride beguiled,
 "Her father's roof had fled;
 "Grey hairs, like wintry falls of snow,
 "Their whitening hues began to throw,
 "Upon her sacred head.
 "Her cheerful step, her tranquil mien,
 "Each day more slow, more sad were seen;
 "And, on her pallid face,
 "Easy it were for stranger eye,
 "With no discourteous scrutiny,
 "The lines of grief to trace.
 "But when thy fickle, perjured lord
 "Had flung thee off, no more adored,
 "But viewed with just disdain,
 "Oh! how her gentle, loving heart,
 "Free from thy guilt, yet felt its smart,
 "And suffered in thy pain!
 "Then, O my angel! then I saw
 "The shades of darkness round thee draw
 "With thickening, deepening gloom;

“ And vainly cried to Heaven above,
 “ To spare me, in its pitying love,
 “ So terrible a doom.

“ Why did I live this day to see ?

“ This day of deepest misery ?

“ This day of dark despair ?

“ Why didst not thou, O Glorious God,

“ Smite me in mercy with Thy rod,

“ And lay me prostrate there ?

“ Hence, wanton, hence ! With weary feet

“ Go, search for some obscure retreat,

“ Where guilt like thine may hide ;

“ And still, in each remotest sphere,

“ Let these words ring upon thy ear,

“ FOR THEE THY MOTHER DIED !

“ Still let her melancholy shade

“ Haunt thee, in ghastly shroud arrayed,

“ And with meek grief thy guilt upbraid,

“ Throughout the universe :

“ And still, to sink thee in despair,

“ Through the wide world this burden bear,

“ THY WRETCHED FATHER'S CURSE !”

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Slow, sad, and solemn, like the last farewell
 To friends departed, sounds the funeral knell,

Slow, sad, and solemn, to the sacred porch,
 (Begloomed, not lighted, by the lurid torch,)
 Death's pomp advances : 'tis the homage paid
 By vanquished mortals to his kingly shade.
 Angels behold, and weep while they survey
 God's living temple turned to putrid clay ;
 Demons behold, and triumph, till they hear
 The Church's requiem chanted o'er the bier :
 For faith even here can strike her golden strings,
 And from the grave her bold " Resurgam " sings.

'Tis over ; and the crowds who came to gaze
 Or drop the pitying tear, have gone their ways,
 How little heeding that the hour draws nigh,
 When they, too, like the buried one, must die !
 'Tis over ; and, with rude, unseemly din,
 The hurrying grave-digger shovels in
 The ignoble earth ; and, on the turf relaid,
 Stamps with his foot, and batters with his spade ;
 And he, too, quits the spot, and whistles gay,
 As home he plods, some rustic roundelay ;
 And all is silent, as the lips that sleep
 Beneath that load of earth, so dark and deep.

But see ! who yonder comes with stealthy tread,
 And eyes that wander timidly around ;
 As if she trembled lest the very dead
 Should chide her footfalls, wakened by the
 sound ?

Who is it?—'Tis the hapless wretch, who hears
 Her father's curse still ringing in her ears;
 And comes, heart-broken, yet to breathe one
 prayer,
 One faltering prayer to Heaven her soul to spare
 Life's bitter dregs, and let the lost one hide
 In the grave's shelter, by her mother's side.

On the cold damp ground, On the grassy mound,
 Where her mother calmly sleeps,
 On that lowly bed Of the silent dead
 She lays her down, and weeps.

And her thoughts fly back O'er the golden track
 Of her childhood's sunny hours;
 When the world shone bright In life's morning
 light,
 Or was dimmed by transient showers.

She recalls the time When, in youth's sweet
 prime,
 With the false one she would rove
 On the sun-clad hill, By the sparkling rill,
 Or in the religious grove.

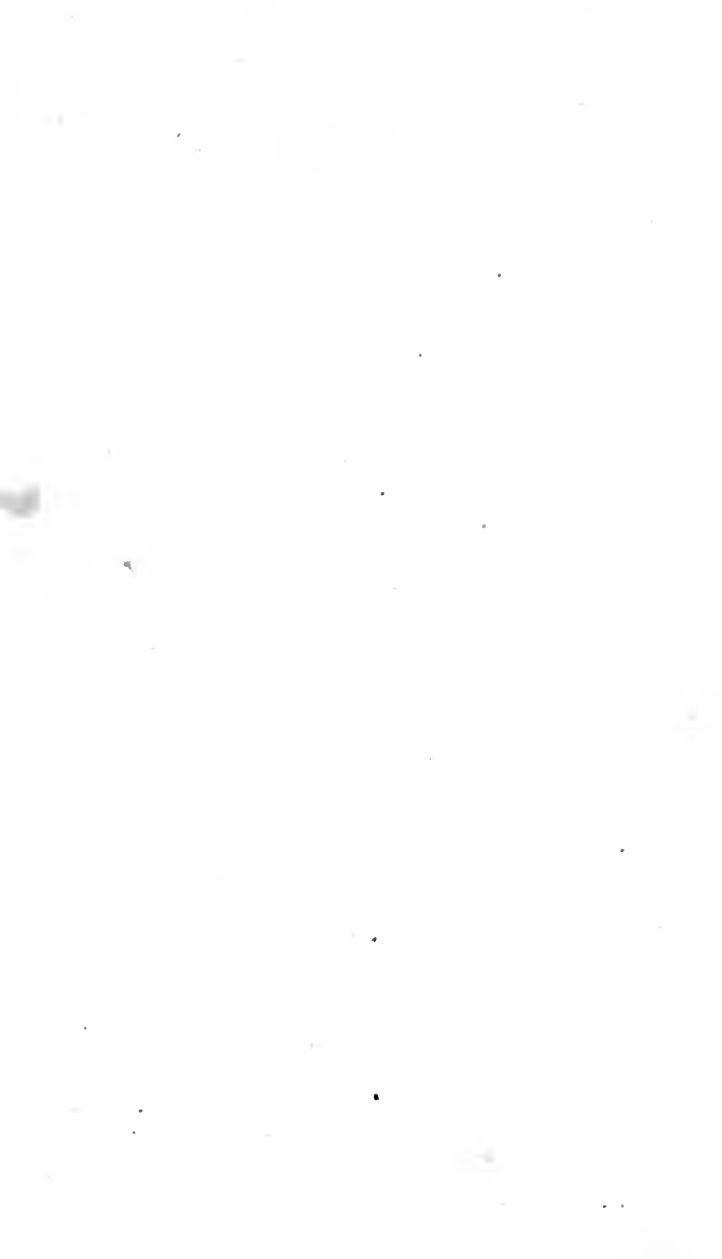
Then she lists again To the swelling strain
 In the convent's hallowed pile,
 Now falling soft, Now rising aloft,
 Through the dimly lighted aisle.

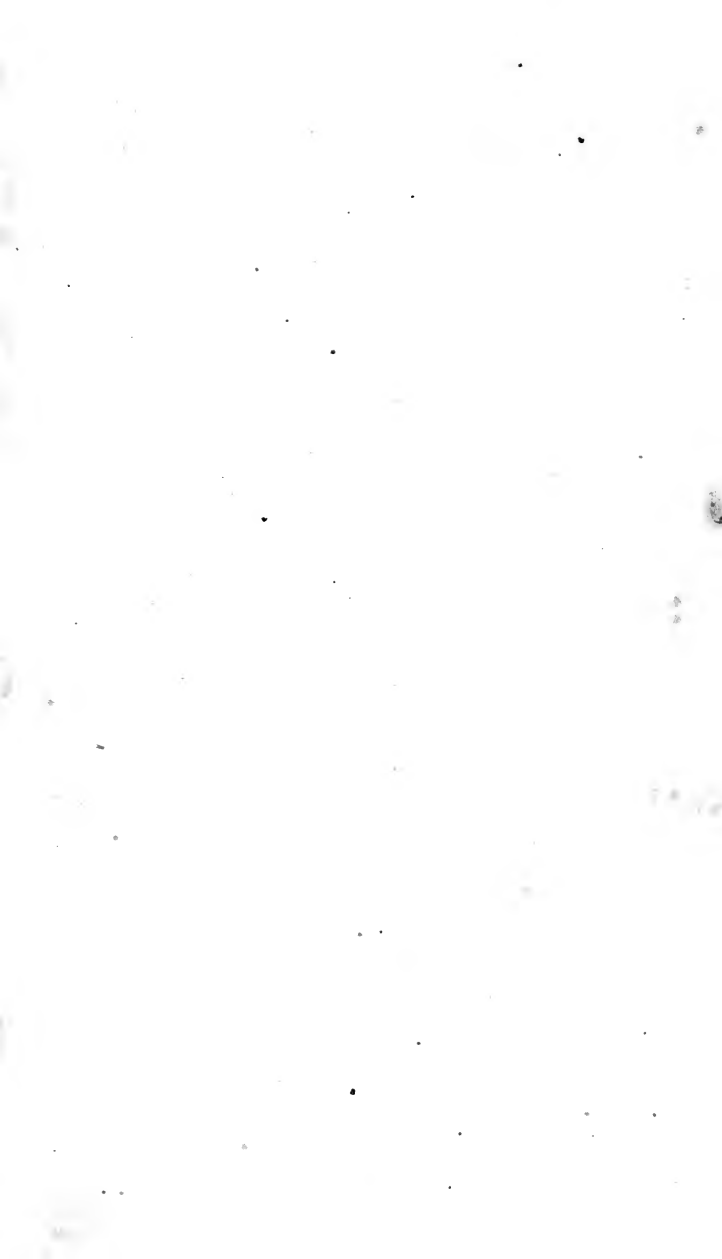
And her plighted troth, And the perjured oath,
 And her farewell, and her doom,
 Like a spectral band, All around her stand,
 Faintly visioned 'mid the gloom.

But lo! a form angelic seems to rise
 E'en from the grave whereon she prostrate lies,
 And higher, and still higher lifts its head
 Till round its brows the ethereal clouds are spread.
 White are its locks, and shining as the snows
 When the glad sun his vernal lustre throws;
 Its face is radiant as the sun's bright ray,
 When the red morning kindles into day;
 Light fleecy vapors robe the form divine,
 And his tall limbs like burning columns shine.
 In his left hand a golden cross he bears,
 While to the throne of God his right he rears;
 Then, with a voice melodious, yet sublime,
 Like the deep thunders heard in torrid clime,
 He thus addresses her :—" One woe is past ;
 " Another comes ; and then a third,—the last.
 " Rise, Theroigne, rise ; yet shalt thou live to see
 " Thy triumph in the traitor's misery.
 " That perjured wretch shall, from thy injured
 hands,
 " Suffer the punishment his crime demands :
 " Thy father, softening, shall search out thy
 track,
 " Revoke his curse, and call his wanderer back,

"Alas, too late ! between the kindred souls
 "See what a tide of human slaughter rolls !
 "Poor child of sorrow ! couldst thou but restrain
 "The raging torrent, or its wrath sustain !—
 "No more !—remember, in thy darkest hour,
 "GOD'S BRIGHTEST JEWEL IS HIS MERCY'S POWER."

'Tis gone ; and Theroigne quits her native land,
 To seek for refuge on a foreign strand.







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